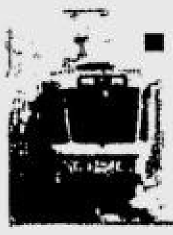


Business / B1
LRTA debt conversion set

Metro / A22
Mothers of rob-slay suspects held

Sports / A28
Trinidad TKOs Mayorga for crown

Entertainment / A33
Grenade found in Ai Ai's house

Tanong ng Bayan / A20
Mga imbestigasyon ng Kongreso: May silbi ba?
Win a 21" TV! Text 2910 now!

Rosales warns gov't vs granting amnesty

By Martin P. Marfil and Joselle d.R. Badilla,
PDI Mindanao Bureau

A CATHOLIC Church leader has warned the government against granting amnesty to the Oakwood mutineers without any firm guarantee from the soldiers that they would not

ROSALES/ A21

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, October 4, 2004 ★★ 76 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 299 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Ex-agri chief hits back at detractors

By Norman Bordadora

SO, SUE me.

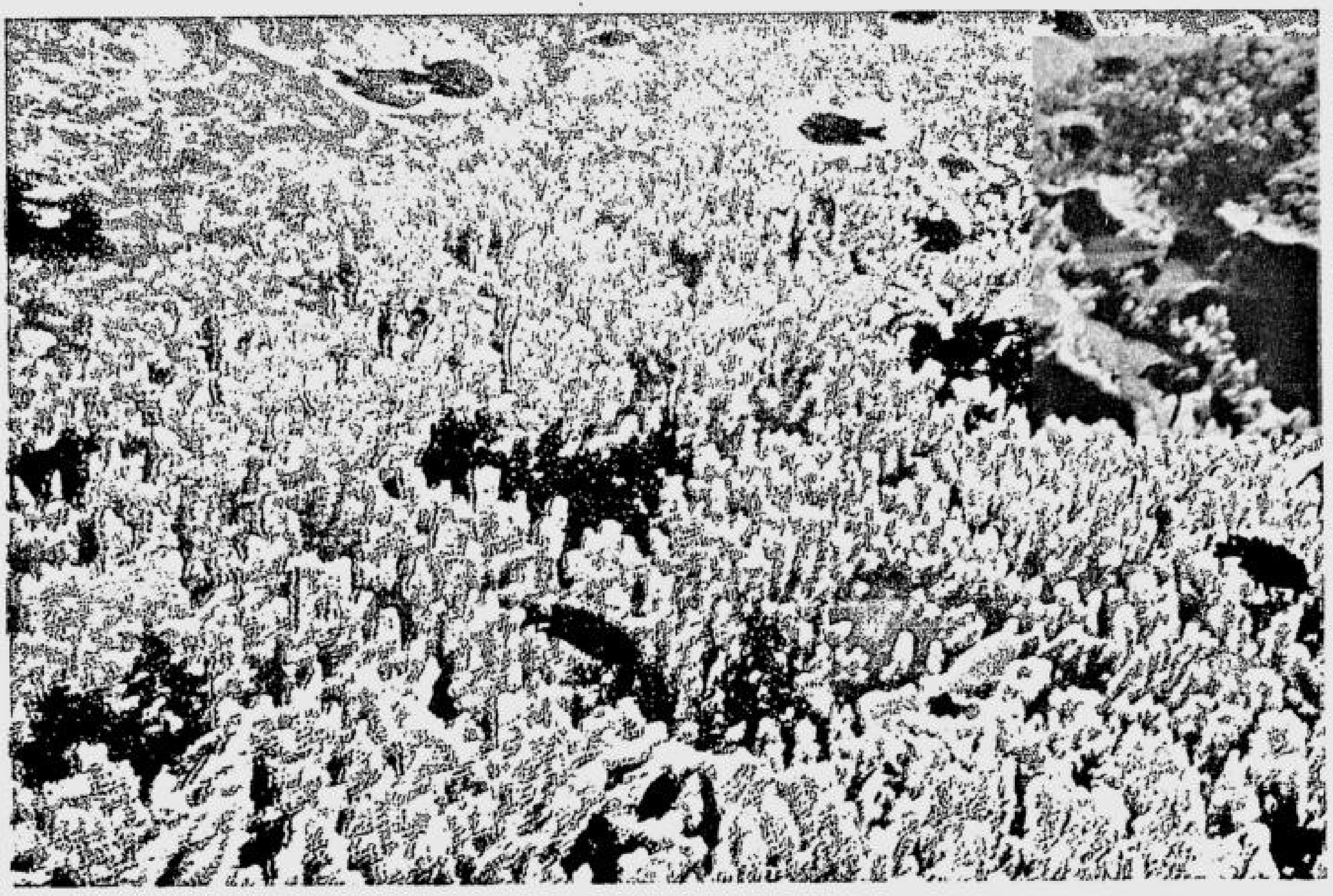
Smarting from allegations that he had charged charter flights and cell phone bills to the government, former Agriculture

EX-AGRI/ A20

ABONADO PA NGA AKO EH!

Palace to 15 GOCCs: Shape up or face ax

Execs told to come up with viable operational plans



JERRY CARUAL/PCPO-MALACAÑANG

UNDERWATER PARADISE
A spectacular show of colorful corals and fish 60 feet under the sea off Pescador Island in Moalboal, Cebu, attracted President Macapagal-Arroyo to its depths last week. The photographer, however, was instructed not to release any shots of Ms Arroyo to media outfits for unknown reasons.

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SHAPE up or get the ax.

This was the warning of Malacañang to 15 government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs), 13 of which, according to the Department of Budget and Management, lost a total of nearly P20 billion in 2003. *(See list at right.)*

Malacañang plans to abolish heavily losing GOCCs to rein in the government's budget deficit.

"We can abolish the non-performing GOCCs altogether if the administration sees no viable effort among its officials to turn these corporations around," Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said.

The INQUIRER has counted 30 GOCCs that lost a combined P140.2 billion last year.

The GOCCs and the GFIs accounted for P2 trillion of the P5.4 trillion public sector debt as of September 2003. Their liabilities have been assumed by the national government, exacerbating the budget deficit and the public sector debt.

"Definitely, we cannot afford to subsidize all of our GOCCs. We need to clean up our books and prune all unnecessary expenses," Boncodin said.

Boncodin was directed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to review the performance of the GOCCs and GFIs in the wake of warnings that the Philippines could face an Argentina-style crisis in two to three years unless it addressed its growing deficit and debt.

Malacañang and Congress have targeted the GOCCs in the ongoing austerity program because of their high interest ex-

PALACE/ A20

IN THE RED

Net Loss (2003) / GOCC

Net Loss (2003)	GOCC
(P7.585 billion)	National Food Authority
(P3.838 billion)	Light Rail Transit Authority
(P2.947 billion)	Philippine National Oil Co.
(P2.302 billion)	National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp.
(P857.94 million)*	Philippine National Railways
(P490 million)	Technology and Livelihood Resource Center
(P435 million)	National Irrigation Administration
(P292 million)	National Tobacco Administration
(P282 million)	National Development Co.
(P208 million)	Philippine Coconut Authority
(P71.54 million)*	Al-Amanah Islamic Investment Bank of the Philippines
(P52 million)	Philippine Television Network Inc.
(P8 million)	Philippine Crop Insurance Corp.
P5.64 million*	Human Settlement Development Corp.
P4.38 million*	National Housing Authority

SOURCE: Department of Budget and Management's Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing Fiscal Year 2005 and
* Commission on Audit

Bishop doubts gov't ignorant of 'jueteng' payola list

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and Blanche S. Rivera

LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he did not see the need to identify the officials receiving money from "jueteng" operators, throwing back the challenge of naming them at Malacañang.

"If the government does not even know the already well-known big time (jueteng) operators in Luzon, (then) what does it know?" said Cruz, chair of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng (National Crusade Against Jueteng).

Malacañang on Saturday urged Cruz to name the national officials on the take from operators of jueteng, an illegal numbers game, so the government could prosecute them. Jueteng is a P30-billion-a-year industry, earning mostly from bets of the poor.

By asking Krusada to reveal the names of the government officials involved in jueteng, the government was effectively passing on its responsibility to a "puny NGO," Cruz said.

"This is bad news for those who expect the government to work for them, watch after them, to promote their common good," Cruz said in a statement.

At a joint press conference with Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay on Friday, Cruz said a private investigation had revealed that at least four national officials from Luzon and the Visayas and a number of mayors were involved in jueteng.

Cruz said one of the national officials was receiving P6 million a month in jueteng payola, but he refused to identify them because his group was still gathering evidence.

BISHOP/ A20

RP's only world-class special ice skater

By Blanche S. Rivera

JONNEL Enorme has cerebral palsy and multiple disabilities, including hearing and visual impairment. But he won three of a harvest of 90 gold medals—plus 62 silvers and 26 bronzes—that garnered for the Philippines in August the prestigious World Recreational Ice Skating Championship.

The country's only special ice skater, Jonnel, 23, slurs and half-yells every word he says. He walks with a curious gait and wears a contorted, seemingly uncontrollable expression on his face.

But on the rink, nobody can tell.

"They don't know he's special when he skates. They only realize it when they get a closer look and notice the way he talks," coach Rene Rones said during an interview at SM Megamall, where Jonnel practices.

Of the country's ice skaters, it is Jonnel who almost always receives a standing ovation at international

RP'S ONLY/ A4

WORLD-CLASS performance from ice skater Jonnel Enorme despite his disabilities. EDWIN BACASMAS

Newsweek poll puts Kerry ahead of Bush

WASHINGTON—Just a month before the US election, President George W. Bush suddenly faces a fight for his political life after a resurgent John Kerry staved off elimination and hauled himself back into the game.

The Democratic candidate was celebrating his best week on the campaign trail in months as a Newsweek poll suggested that Kerry had not only wiped out Bush's modest lead but even pulled slightly ahead of his Republican rival.

The first poll taken since the debate on Thursday night showed Kerry running even with Bush after having trailed him in the same survey last month.

A Newsweek poll of 1,013 registered voters from late Thursday to early Saturday showed Kerry had the support of 47 percent and Bush 45 percent, with independent candidate Ralph Nader at 2 percent. The

NEWSWEEK/ A19

Kerry gets campaign back on track after debating Bush

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

SEN. JOHN Kerry scored points against US President George W. Bush in their first televised debate on Thursday night, breathing new life to the Democratic Party's presidential campaign a month before the November election. Kerry emerged a clear winner in instant polls of US viewers taken after the debate, the first of his three face-to-face encounters with Bush.

The ABC poll showed 45 percent of TV viewers thought Kerry had won the debate, while 36 percent said it was Bush who did. In the CBS poll, 44 percent said Kerry had won compared to 26 percent for Bush. In the CNN poll, Kerry was far ahead with 79 percent and Bush with 18 percent.

The debate gave Kerry the opportunity to regain the initiative in the campaign in which, according to the latest national

KERRY/ A19

CORPUS: It's time for a long break. ROGER MARGALLO

Corpus ends controversial AFP career

By Fe Zamora and Alcuin Papa

HE RETIRES today at age 60, ending one of the most controversial careers in Philippine military history as soldier, rebel, whistle-blower and master spy.

Now, all Brig. Gen. Victor Corpus wants is a simple low-key life as a civilian, preferably as a farmer on Guimaras Island, where he keeps a mango orchard.

"I think it's time for a long break, to be away from it all," Corpus told the INQUIRER.

He said he was not interested in any government position, whether as a director in a government-owned and -controlled cor-

CORPUS/ A21

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will have cloudy skies with rains. The rest of the country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/10/04/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Alleged Cebu drug kingpin charged

By Nelson F. Flores and Jhunnex Napallacan, *PDI Visayas Bureau*

THE PHILIPPINE Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) yesterday announced the filing of criminal charges against the alleged brains of the illegal drug operation in Mandaue City which was raided by anti-narcotics operatives late last month.

Calvin de Jesus Tan was charged before the Mandaue City Regional Trial Court with violation of Republic Act 9165, the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Tan is currently detained in Hong Kong for violation of China's anti-illegal drug law.

PDEA Undersecretary and Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. said the agency is currently working with the foreign affairs department for Tan's immediate extradition.

Consul General Corazon del Monte Jover in Hong Kong told Avenido the court magistrate there did not allow Tan to post bail but instead opted to continue hearing his case of possession of dangerous drugs until Nov. 1.

Avenido said he did not know what prompted the Hong Kong court to issue such a decision when possession of dangerous drugs was a bailable offense there.

"I believe the magistrate decided to detain him there until Nov. 1 because of the representations made by the Philippine government," he said.

Tan, 29, a Chinese-Filipino who holds a Philippine passport, was arrested by customs officers in Hong Kong last week at a ferry terminal bound for Macau.

Seized from Tan were cash totaling $820,000 in US and Hong Kong notes, as well as a small quantity of "ice" (methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu) and cocaine that police said was for the suspect's personal use.

He was also found carrying a number of passbooks to bank accounts that contained deposits amounting to $11 million.

Tan was believed to be the head of the operation of the three shabu laboratories and warehouses that were raided by anti-narcotics agents in three neighboring barangays in Mandaue City, Cebu.

Three of the 11 men arrested in the raid pointed to Tan as the mastermind of the operation, allegedly the biggest in the Philippines, if not Southeast Asia.

Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco, vice chair of the House committee on illegal drugs, identified the three as Briton Simon Lao and Filipinos Joseph Yu and Allan Yap Garcia.

The others arrested were Chinese Bao Xia Fu, Tau Hue and Liu Fu; Taiwanese Hu Tiao Yi and Lin Li Ku; Malaysians Siew Kin Weng and Liew Kam Song, and Filipino Joseph Lopez.

The 11, along with Tan, were charged with the illegal manufacture of shabu before the RTC in Mandaue City. *With a report from Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Let's talk, embattled Garcia tells detractors

By Norman Bordadora and Carlito Pablo

AFTER all the brickbats, embattled Government Service Insurance Insurance president and general manager Winston Garcia yesterday offered the olive branch to disgruntled government employees and invited them to a dialogue to discuss the issues raised against him.

"Even those who have recently staged mass actions at the GSIS are most welcome. I just hope that everyone would come with an open mind, ready to discuss issues rationally and without an intention to disrupt the proceedings," Garcia said.

The GSIS is set to hold a series of discussions with representatives of its 1.5 million members to inform them of the reforms being implemented at the agency and to address the alleged "disinformation" being peddled by vested interest groups.

"The agency has always been open to the ideas and suggestions of its members, thus the dialogue would just be part of the management's continuing effort to reach out to them," Garcia said.

Garcia said he wanted all GSIS members and the public to know that the GSIS had approved 1,825,811 loan applications amounting to P46.9 billion from January to August 2004 alone.

He said these figures should belie claims that the GSIS had stopped granting loans to its members. "We at the GSIS are quick to approve loans of our members as long as their papers are in order," he said.

Garcia said he also wanted to update GSIS members on the programs being implemented, including the computerization of its database and the issuance of the GSIS eCard to members which would speed up the processing of pensions, loan applications and other benefits, while weeding out fraudulent claims.

Operations normal

Meanwhile, GSIS assured its members that its operations were normal despite threats of more mass actions.

Omelita Tiangco, GSIS senior vice president for finance, made the assurance after scores of GSIS members recently trooped to different branches of Land Bank of the Philippines to encash their checks after rumors surfaced that the mass actions would cripple GSIS.

Tiangco said that despite the large number of GSIS members who encashed their checks, nobody was turned away. "Everyone who had a GSIS check was accommodated," she said.

Ally in Congress

While five solons are ganging up on Garcia, the embattled GSIS chief has found an ally in Congress.

Rep. Eduardo Zialcita of Parañaque City yesterday said there was no basis for the calls for Garcia's ouster.

"Trial by publicity, like the one Mr. Garcia is subjected to day after day, has no place in a society that claims respect for human rights and the rule of law," Zialcita said.

Zialcita said Garcia had the constitutional right to be presumed innocent until found guilty by a court of law.

Garcia's critics include Representatives Rolex Suplico of Iloilo, Eduardo Veloso of Leyte, Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur, Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar and Crispin Beltran of the party-list Anakpawis.

Amortization questioned

Yesterday, Beltran fired off another broadside at Garcia, claiming the GSIS chief was remiss in fully paying the monthly amortization on his P2.1 million GSIS loan which Garcia used to buy a Volvo sedan.

Citing documents furnished by disgruntled GSIS employees, Beltran said Garcia was supposed to pay P56,414.07 a month for his loan.

"However, the same document reveals Garcia paying only the amount of P43,123.06," Beltran said.

Garcia contracted the loan in June and had paid only P129.369.18 for the first three months instead of the required amount of P169,242.21.

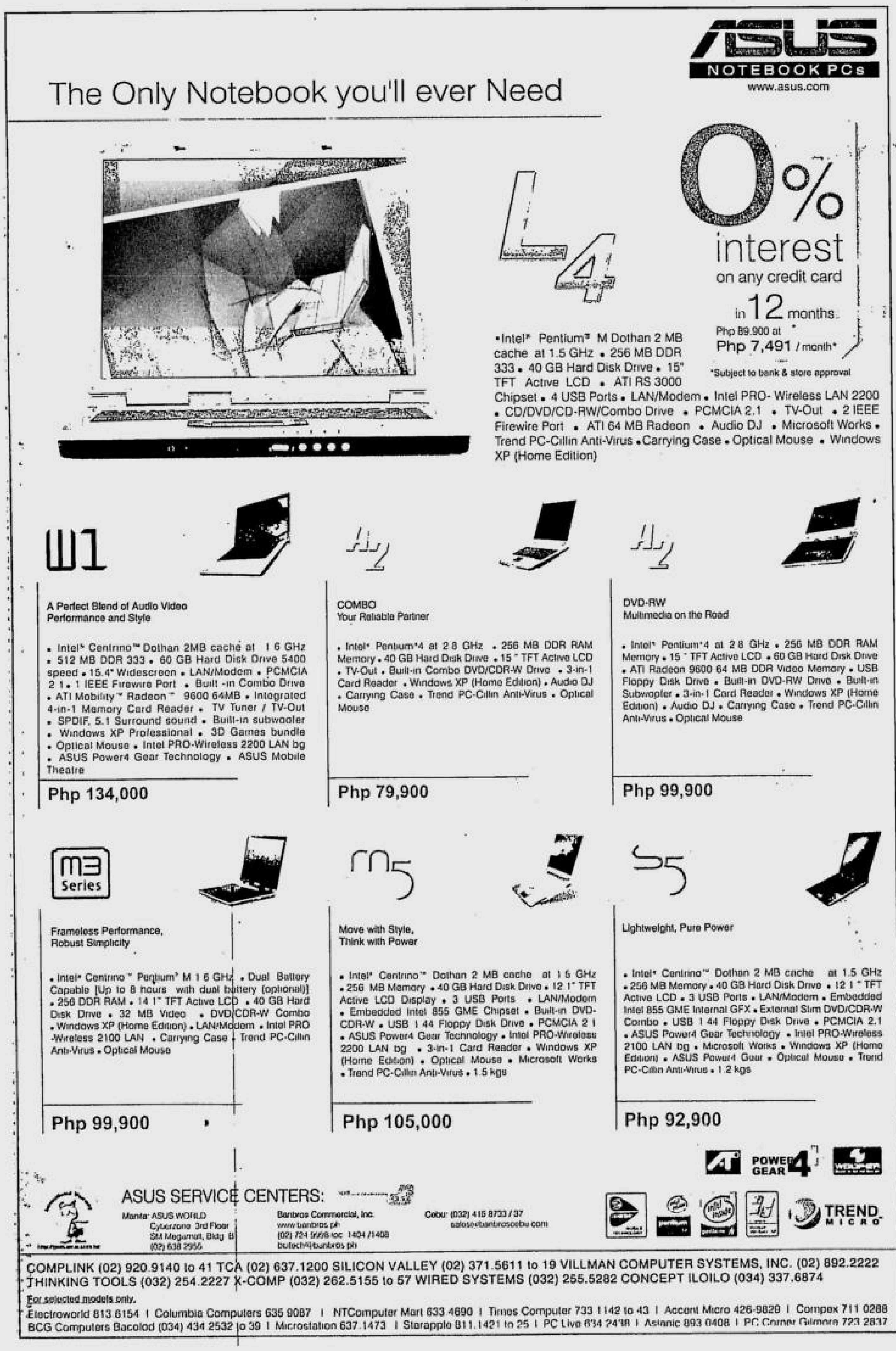
But Beltran's claim was denied by a top GSIS executive yesterday who said that, in fact, Garcia had overpaid a previous loan by as much as P73,000.

GSIS executive vice president Enriqueta Disuanco said Garcia received the P2.1 million loan on June 23, with the first monthly amortization of P56,414.07 due in August.

Disuanco said the P43,123.06 monthly amortization which Beltran claimed was an underpayment actually referred to the monthly amortization of an earlier loan which Garcia had fully paid off as of June.

She said despite the full payment of the previous loan, the GSIS still deducted P129,369.18 from Garcia's June to August pay checks.

Disuanco said the GSIS made its first deduction of Garcia's P2.1 million loan from the P129,369.18 excess payment he made.



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Mahathir to discuss peace, fiscal crisis

FORMER Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad will discuss the Philippine government's efforts to make peace with Muslim separatist rebels in Mindanao when he meets with President Macapagal-Arroyo this week, a Filipino official said Sunday.

MAHATHIR

Mahathir will meet with Ms Arroyo over dinner tonight before his speech to the Philippine Business Conference on Tuesday, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

Ms Arroyo will likely thank Mahathir for his role in fostering the resumption of peace talks between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) when he was in power, Romulo said.

He said Mahathir, who is credited with developing Malaysia's economy, would also discuss Philippine efforts to avoid a looming fiscal crisis.

"The President said she would welcome any advice that Dr. Mahathir may wish to give her," Romulo added.

Malaysia is hosting the resumption of peace talks between the government and the MILF and is leading a mission from Muslim countries to monitor the cease-fire in strife-torn Mindanao.

Mahathir will be accompanied by his wife, Dr. Siti Hasmah, on the two-day visit.

"This is a friendly visit and President Arroyo looks forward to an engaging and profound discussion with one of Asia's acknowledged statesmen," Romulo said. *AFP*

Sulu sultan vows to get Sabah back from Malaysia

THE NEWLY crowned sultan of Sulu said on Sunday he would fight to get back the state of Sabah from Malaysian control, claiming territorial rights over the North Borneo territory.

"I will fight for my family's rights in the World Court," Rodinood Julaspi Kiram II told hundreds of followers outside a mosque in Quezon City, where he was crowned the 29th sultan of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo.

"Malaysia is illegally occupying Sabah. Sabah is ours, we will take it back," he said.

Kiram said he was appalled to see television images of Filipino women and children being maltreated by Malaysian police in Sabah. Tens of thousands of Filipinos had been sent home from Sabah since 2002.

"The Malaysians have no authority to expel Filipinos from Sabah because the territory belongs to us," he said, adding that he would enlist the help of the Philippine government in bringing his case to the International Court of Justice.

Kiram, 56, is only now ascending to the sultanate's throne, five years after his father's death, because of confusion over succession rules. The last sultan of Sulu left about 70 families as heirs.

Kiram said Malaysia helped Muslim rebels fight Manila in the 1970's, providing the separatists with sanctuary, training bases, weapons and moral support. He said he knew about Malaysia's role in the rebellion because he was a former guerrilla leader himself.

Kiram said Malaysia recently changed its strategy and agreed to broker peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the Muslim rebels only to protect its claim on Sabah.

The dispute over Sabah is among long-standing irritants in the ties between the two Southeast Asian nations, but it was placed on the back-burner as trade and investment links grew in the early 1990's.

The Sultanate of Sulu obtained Sabah from the Sultanate of Brunei as a gift for helping put down a rebellion on Borneo island. The British leased Sabah and transferred control of the territory to Malaysia after the end of World War II.

But even after Sabah became part of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur continued to pay annual rent of 5,000 ringgit ($1,315) to the heirs of the sultan of Sulu. *Reuters*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cell phone 'spam' to be probed

NOWADAYS, "spam" is not only luncheon meat but unsolicited advertisements that find their way into one's e-mail and, lately, one's cell phone.

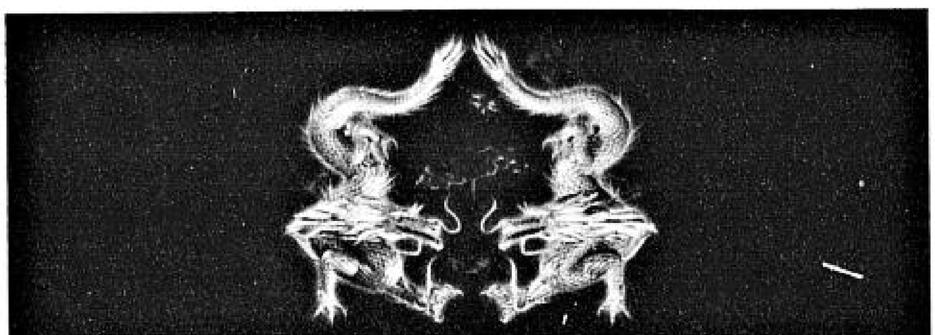
But while there are "firewalls" to block spam from one's computer, nothing can stop the pesky messages from invading a mobile phone.

Officials of the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) told the Senate committee on illegal drugs and public order on Friday that it was looking into the proliferation of spam through cell phones.

NTC Commissioner Ronald Solis told the committee the agency had formed a technical working group "on how best to address these unsolicited ads."

Solis said the NTC has invited representatives of mobile companies to participate in the investigation.

Christine O. Avendaño



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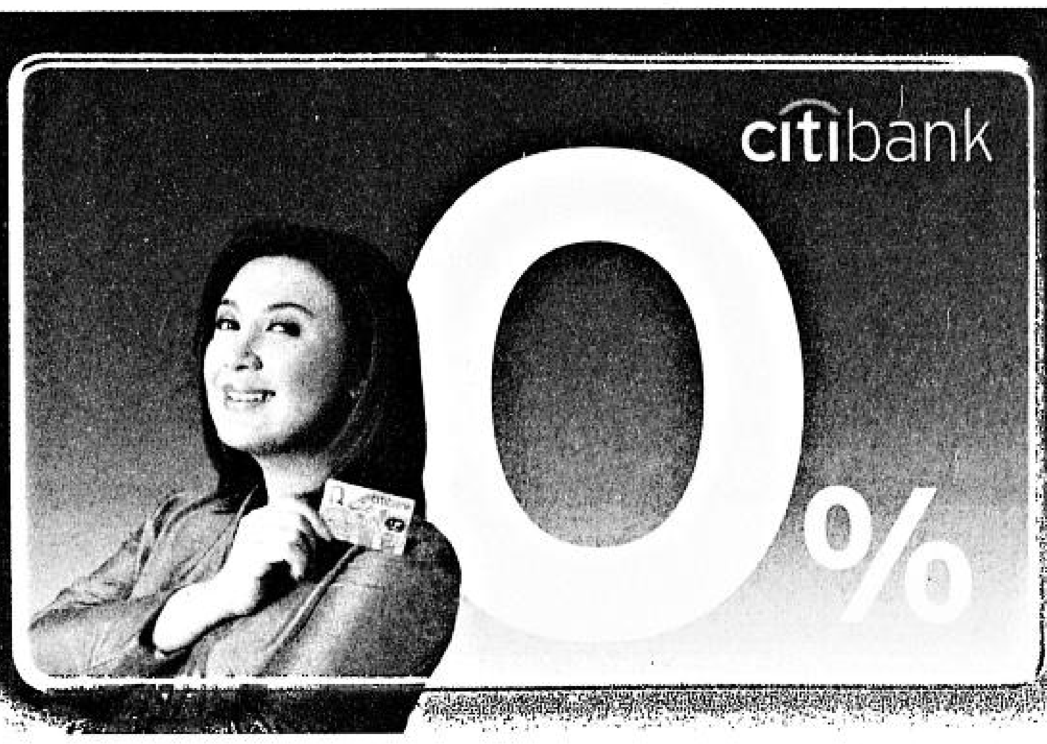

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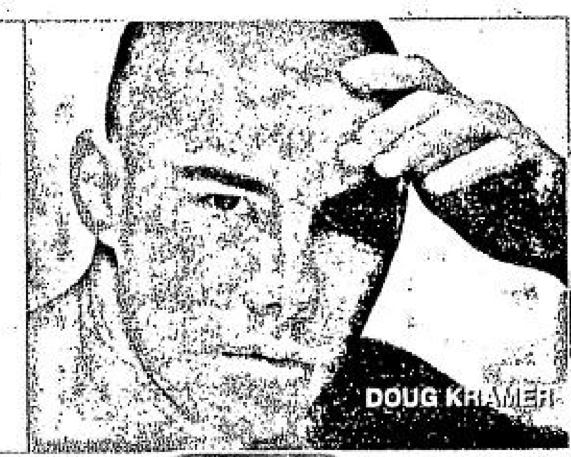

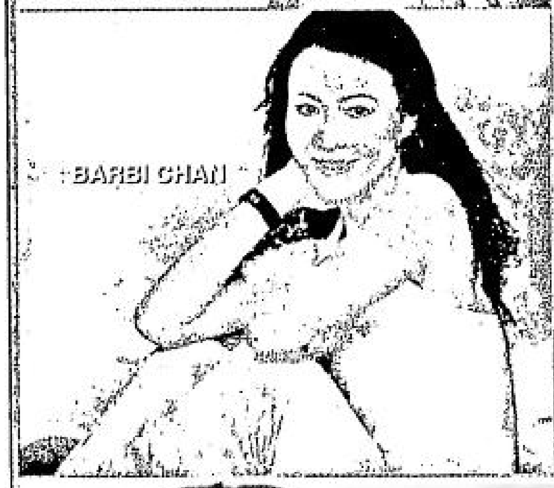

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RP's only world-class special ice skater

From page A1

competitions because of his skills despite his condition, Rones noted.

The applause is well deserved.

His locomotor development stunted by cerebral palsy, Jonnel could not walk or talk until he was 8 years old. He was unable to play, or feed himself, or even go to the toilet alone. His mother Elena had to carry him everywhere.

"The doctor told me he would not live long, and I was ready for that," Elena said. "But I also prepared myself to accept whatever he would become if he survived."

Jonnel was born two months premature, small enough to fit in a palm, and was jaundiced to boot. Doctors immediately diagnosed multiple disorders.

Elena recalled that she had not immediately informed her husband, Jose, a seaman, of the child's condition. All she sent in a telegraph was: "Gave birth, baby boy, alive. Cesarean."

When finally she gathered the courage to tell all, Jose was sympathetic. Until now, Elena said, it is Jonnel's special needs that keep her husband working. Raising their son is "financially challenging," according to her. But the bigger requirements have been "a strong faith, a kind heart and endless courage."

Elena quit her job and learned as much as she could about Jonnel's afflictions. She and her husband also dropped their desire to have two more children so they could focus on the boy.

To get Jonnel on his feet, Elena tried all kinds of tricks. Sometimes, she would fasten a belt around the boy's waist and attach this to a high post or to herself to pull him up. Every night, she massaged Jonnel's limbs with coconut oil, which she ordered from Iloilo. She does this up to now.

"I can't tell you enough how hard it was for me," Elena recalled. "Sometimes, I cried as I tried again and again, day and night, to teach him to walk, without success. He would always fall down."

But she never came close to giving up. She brought him to beaches in Iloilo and Cavite because she knew that sand was good for the muscles. Besides, Jonnel loved the outdoors.

Even when he had grown more than half her size, she would carry him to the bus stop when they went to the mall, where he would watch other kids play. Painfully shy because of his disabilities, the boy did not mingle.

Elena recounted: "The maid pitied me so much that she would cry whenever Jonnel and I went out. But I always told her never to lose hope, that nothing was impossible with God."

Unexpected results

She enrolled in special education classes so she could better understand and teach her son. She ended up with a master's degree in SPED (Special Education).

"All I really asked of the Lord at the start was for Jonnel to be able to stand up. That would have been enough for me," Elena said. She got much more than she bargained for.

When Jonnel was 5 years old, he managed to stand up and hobbled three steps to greet Elena at the door. She had just come home from work. She was stunned. It was a moment of happiness and hope.

Three years later, Jonnel was walking much better and talking coherently. He studied in a SPED school near their home in Las Piñas, where he eventually finished high school. Then he and 13 others became his mother's first batch of students in a basic computer course for special children at STI in Las Piñas City. He graduated in 2002.

Jonnel's interest in ice skating was sparked by frequent visits to SM Southmall. Watching other children at the sport, he often begged his parents to allow him to try. When he was 16, they finally gave in and enrolled him for one-on-one sessions.

The best part of the new interest was that Jonnel acquired self-confidence, Elena said. "Computer and ice skating are his only hobbies. He really loves to skate. It's the highlight of his day."

Jonnel's coach agreed. From the very start, Rones said, the boy's determination made him stand out from the other children in training. "He never complained. When he fell, he would never say it hurt, even if you saw it on his face. He would simply get up and try again."

Beyond his level

The discipline and tenacity paid off. After four years of practice, SM picked Jonnel to join the team that would compete in Skate Asia 2002 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Rones recalled: "Everybody was silent while he performed. They had learned that he was special, and so they watched closely. When he finished, they gave him a standing ovation." The team bagged second place.

As the Philippines' only world-class special ice skater, Rones said, Jonnel deserves all the support the government can give.

The boy's expenses for the trip to Blaine, Minnesota, in August were shouldered by his parents. Jose and Elena nearly used up all their resources and had to scrounge around for more, just to send Jonnel to the event organized by the Ice Skating Institute of America.

Now the talented special athlete is training for the next world championship in Los Angeles next year. According to Rones, Jonnel is in the freestyle 2 level, and currently perfecting his spin, jump and arabesque.

"He's also keen on the axel," Rones said. "[This means he is] doing things beyond his current level. In the future—who knows?—he might even be qualified to teach the country's first batch of special ice skaters."

For a world champ who started off on feeble limbs, this is not an unlikely next step.

Correction

IN THE BUSINESS section of the Oct. 1 issue, Victor Agustin's column "Cocktales" on Page B3 misstated that Felipe Alfonso was a recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award. It was the Asian Institute of Management which won the Ramon Magsaysay Award for International Understanding in 1995. Alfonso was then the AIM president.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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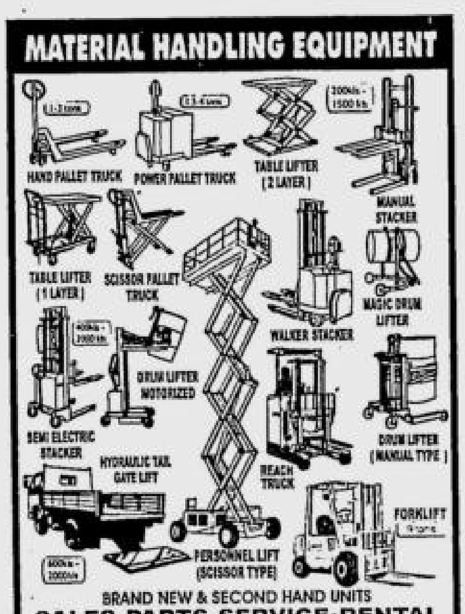

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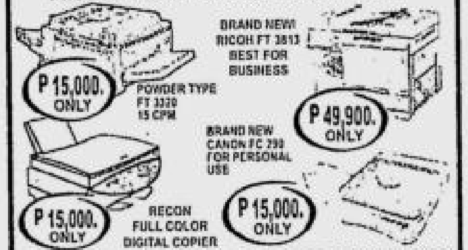
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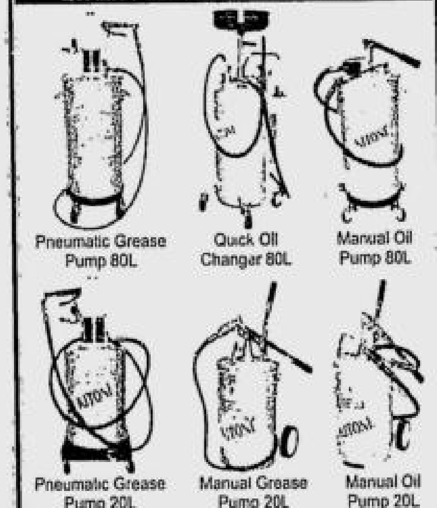

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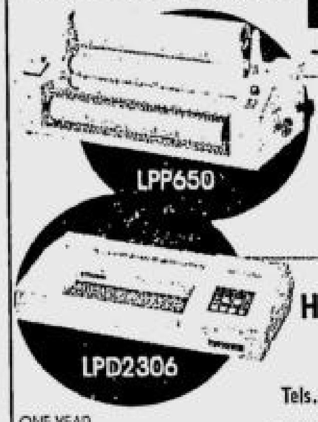

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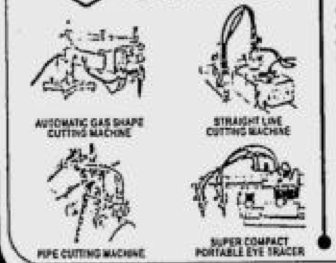
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Japan gives local cops ₱49M to boost mobility

THE JAPANESE government has approved the grant of P49-million in official development assistance (ODA) to the Southern Police District to help boost its capability to curb crime and thwart terrorist attacks.

Japanese Ambassador to Manila Kojiro Takano informed Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong about the grant, Japanese Embassy officials said in a statement.

The ODA, under the non-project grant assistance, would enable the police district to acquire 59 utility vehicles, build a P4-million motorpool and conduct a driver-proficiency course for 150 police officers, the officials said.

"With 63 percent of SPD's police community precincts having no organic vehicles at all, the project is expected to be a great boost to SPD's response time, preventive and reactive capability and visibility," they said.

The SPD, which covers the cities of Makati, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas and Muntinlupa and the municipalities of Taguig and Pateros, had earlier sought the Japanese government's support in its plan to upgrade its mobility.

It oversees security in the country's premier economic and business district which hosts several foreign embassies and consulates and the official residences of ambassadors, as well as three million local residents.

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Smelly Rugby seen as deterrent

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The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency wants the makers of Rugby to make the glue smell "like hell" so that street children would be discouraged from sniffing it.

"If chemical engineers can do it to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), which is essentially an odorless chemical, they can also do it to contact cement," PDEA Undersecretary and Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. said over the weekend.

The aromatic smell of Rugby is the primary reason for its popularity as a substitute stimulant among indigent children. If the contact cement were reformulated to make it stink, this would deter dependents from using it, he said.

Rugby contains tolouene, a controlled substance which is used in the manufacture of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride). Inhaling it produces a "high" similar to the effect of taking shabu. Because it is addictive, its prolonged use can damage the lungs and brain leading to an early death.

Contact cement is affordable and readily available in hardware stores and can be bought by anyone regardless of age.

Rugby is not covered by Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, so the PDEA is powerless to stop those who sell and abuse the stimulant. *Nelson F. Flores*

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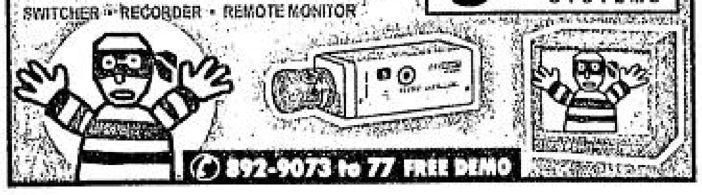

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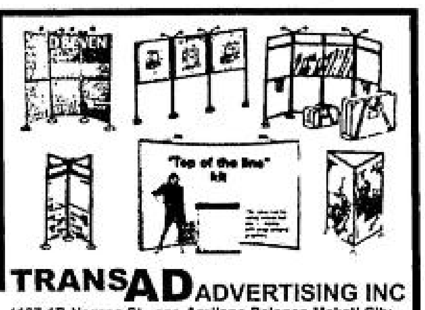
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Probe Chinese behind casino operations, BI urged

A CONGRESSMAN yesterday urged the Bureau of Immigration to investigate a group of Chinese nationals the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) allowed to operate the Sheraton Marina Casino and Hotel in Malate, Manila.

Rep. Catalino Figueroa (Lakas, Western Samar) said the same group was set to expand its gambling operations in the country with the planned opening of another casino in the heart of Chinatown.

"The BI has to determine whether or not these foreigners have valid working permits and if the nature of their business is legal and conducted in a legitimate manner," Figueroa said.

Figueroa identified the Chinese nationals as Jack Lin, also known as Lin Wei Cheng; Jack Lam, Joman Chan and Tonya Tong.

In a privilege speech in September, Figueroa said the Chinese nationals had claimed to be dummies of Macau casino magnate Stanley Ho.

But Figueroa said Ho's camp had denied any links with the Chinese nationals. "My staff got this information... that Mr. Ho had not solicited their services to act as his dummies in the Philippines," Figueroa said.

"It seems that Lin, Lam and Chan are using Mr. Ho's name to gain influence in their dealings here," Figueroa said. "If this is true, then all the more reason we should ring the alarm bells."

Figueroa said Lin's group quietly opened the Sheraton Marina Casino and Hotel for business with the approval of Pagcor.

Figueroa questioned the legality of the move, saying only Congress and not Pagcor could grant a franchise for casino operations.

Figueroa said Lin's group also planned to open a casino at the renovated Binondo Suites located at Ongpin and Padilla Streets in Binondo, Manila. The casino will have at least 175 slot machines.

But the planned casino is being opposed by prominent Chinese-Filipino businessmen in Binondo.

Figueroa said some of his colleagues in the House supported his move to investigate Lin's group and their local partners.

"Jack Lin or Stanley Ho or any other foreign interest cannot ride on Pagcor's franchise. They have to get their own franchise from Congress," Figueroa said.

Figueroa also said another casino was set to open soon with the revival of Ho's floating restaurant in Manila Bay. *Carlito Pablo*

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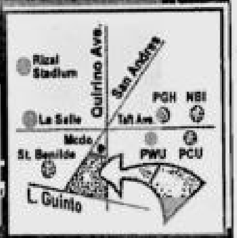

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The WORLD

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US warplanes pound Iraqi rebel enclave for 3rd time

FALLUJAH, Iraq—US warplanes pounded the Iraqi insurgent-held town of Fallujah on Sunday for a third time in just over 24 hours in an ongoing push to wrest hot spots from rebel hands ahead of January elections.

The pre-dawn strike took place just hours after US and Iraqi officials said Samarra, another violence-wracked city, was largely under control after one of their largest post-war military offensives in the country.

Despite such attempts to crush the insurgency, militant groups continued holding scores of foreigners hostage, including a Jordanian, two French journalists and a British engineer who have all been threatened with death.

A senior US military official, however, warned that the militants' shock tactics, such as a wave of car bombings last week that killed scores of children, had the potential to backfire by uniting world opinion against them.

The outskirts of Fallujah were smoldering again after US warplanes bombed a building where the military said between 10 and 15 insurgents suspected of links with Iraq's most wanted man Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi had been shifting weapons.

"A large number of enemy fighters are presumed killed," the army said, without giving an exact toll.

The latest onslaught followed two earlier missions around the Sunni Arab enclave west of Baghdad again targeting suspected Zarqawi hideouts.

In the latest attack, the US military insisted that special measures were taken to ensure no civilians were caught up in the blasts but it was impossible immediately to verify the casualty situation on the ground.

Several women and children were among those killed and wounded in an earlier strike Friday, according to hospital officials.

Meanwhile in Samarra, a key bastion in the Sunni insurgent belt north of the Iraqi capital, hospital officials were still attending the dead after a massive US-Iraqi offensive on Friday and into Saturday that killed at least 125 people.

Corpses in black bags at the city's general hospital were being carried out for burial.

"We cleaned up the city from all the bad guys and terrorists," Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib told reporters on Saturday.

Speaking at City Hall, Naqib said the mission was the most successful to date, and hinted at further action to regain control of other no-go areas.

Asked if Fallujah would be next on the list, the minister said: "I would like to say today rather than tomorrow ... we would be able to do that.

"Fallujah has to come back to Iraq ... we want all Iraqis to participate in the elections."

But a leading Sunni Muslim religious group questioned the logic of using brute force to achieve democratic goals.

"Resorting to iron and fire to prepare for elections is a flawed method," the Committee of Muslim Scholars said. *AFP*

A US soldier on patrol in Samarra Oct. 2. AP

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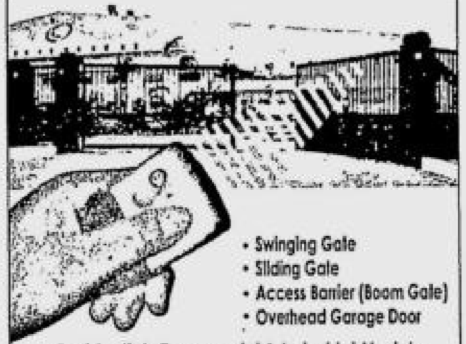

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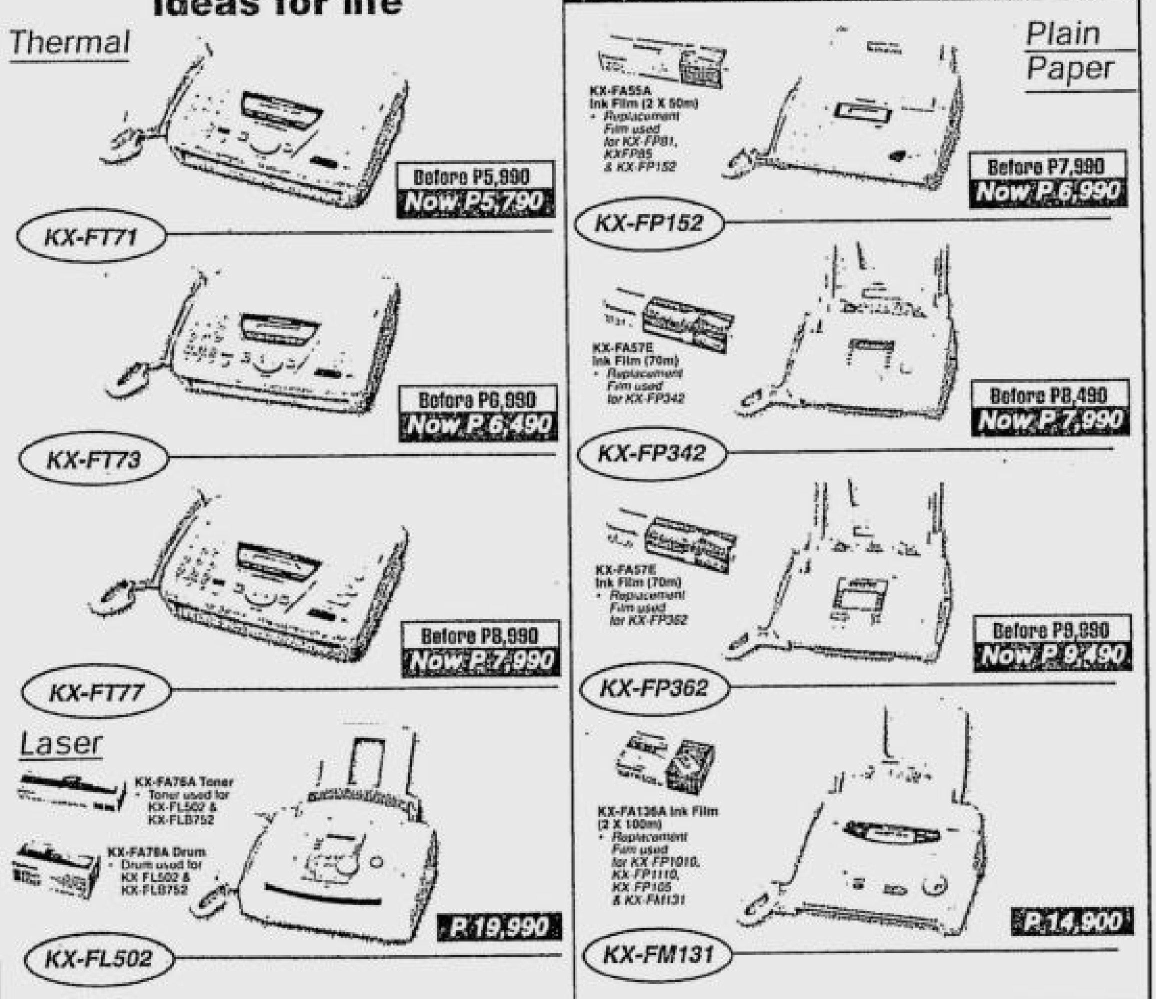
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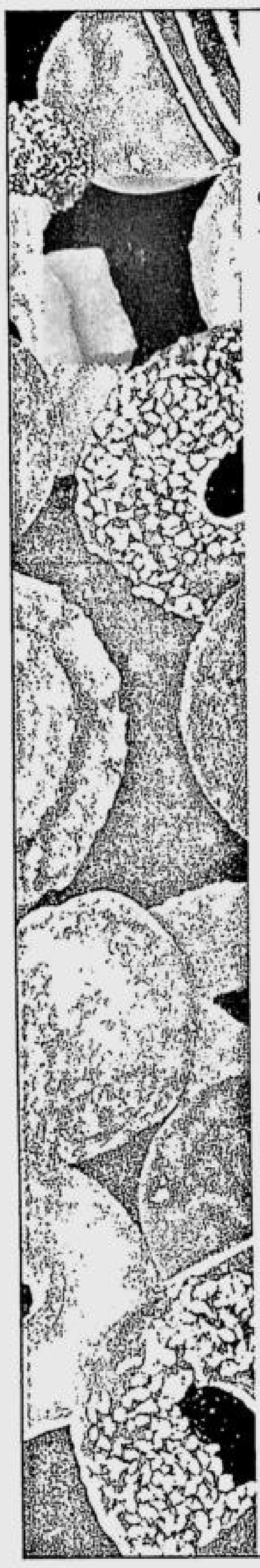

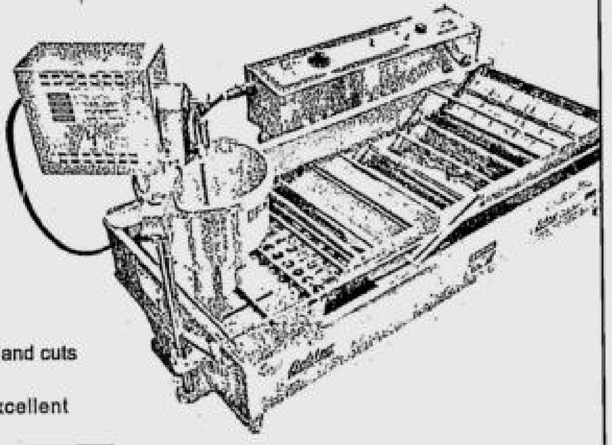

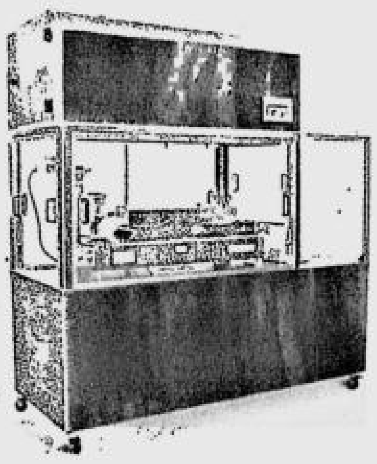

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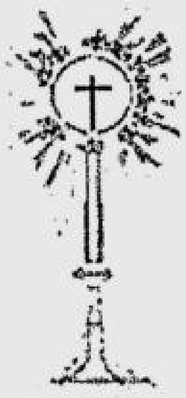

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October 8, 8:00 a.m. - Groundbreaking: New Alabang Campus

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Sharon vows to expand Gaza raid that killed 59

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon vowed Sunday to press ahead with a massive incursion in the Gaza Strip that has killed almost 60 people in five days.

"The operation is progressing in a satisfactory way. Our forces are acting professionally and efficiently. This is not a short operation. We should act for as long as the danger exists," he told Israeli military radio.

Sharon said he had "given the order to change the situation on the Gaza front, to hit at the terrorists, their leadership and those who send them, along with those responsible for making weapons."

A total of 59 people have been killed since late Tuesday when the army launched its "Days of Penitence" operation—one of the deadliest since the start of the Palestinian uprising four years ago—in a bid to prevent rocket attacks by militants. *AFP*

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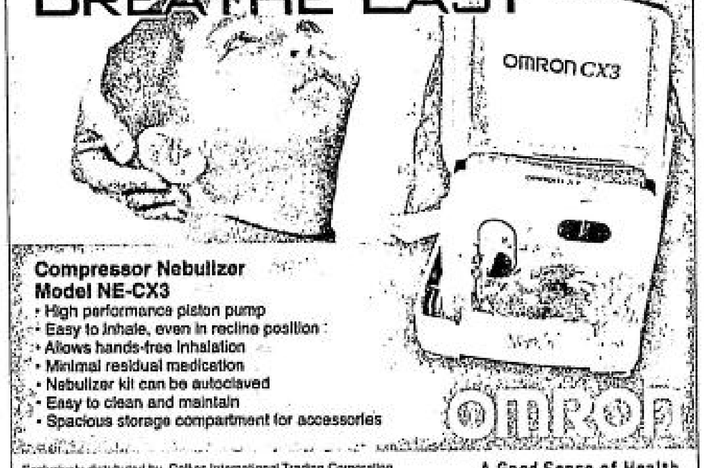

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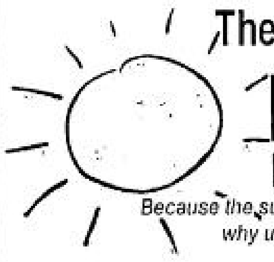
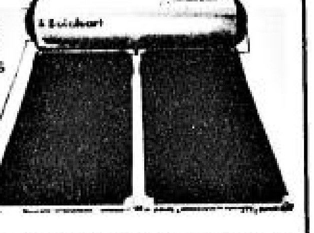

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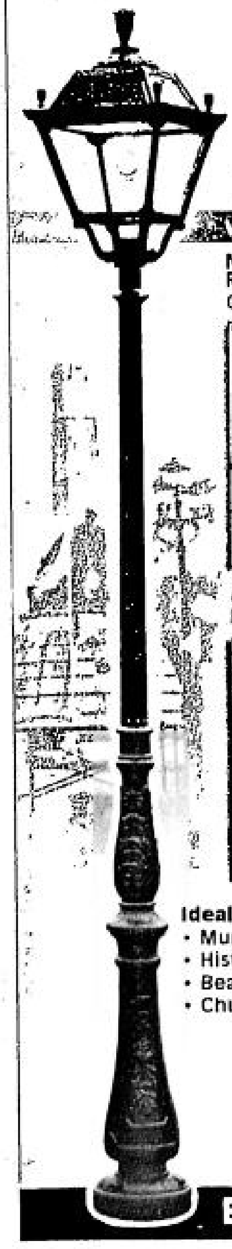
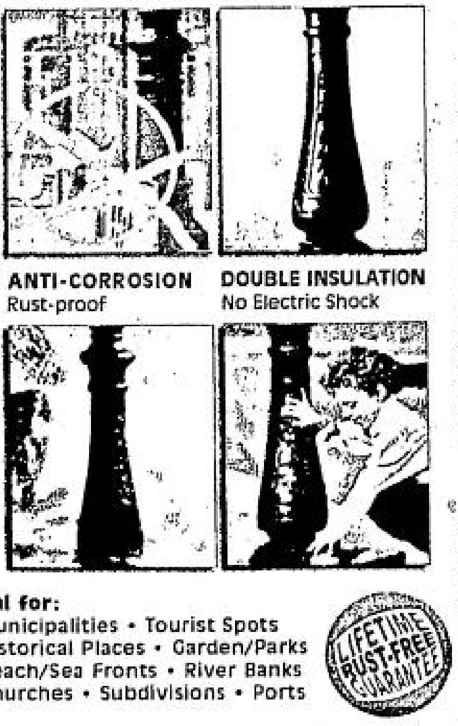
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Pope beatifies Habsburg ruler

EMPEROR Karl I at 26. AP

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II on Sunday beatified the last Austro-Hungarian emperor, Charles I, and a German mystic whose visions inspired Mel Gibson's controversial film "The Passion of the Christ."

The move brings the Habsburg emperor, who is remembered in Austria for authorizing the use of mustard gas during World War I, and mystic Anna Katharina Emmerick one step from sainthood.

"I hope Emperor Charles will serve as an example, especially for those with political responsibilities in Europe today," the Pope said during an open-air ceremony in Saint Peter's Square that was attended by 30,000 worshippers, including around 1,000 members of the Habsburg dynasty.

The Pope also conferred the status of "blessed," the penultimate step to full sainthood, on two Frenchmen and an Italian nun.

Habsburg emperor Charles I became heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire on June 28, 1914, following the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, which historians say was the spark that ignited World War I. He was made emperor in November 1916 and crowned apostolic King of Hungary a month later.

His official biography, published by the Vatican, says he was committed to peace and was the only political leader to support Pope Benedict XV's peace efforts.

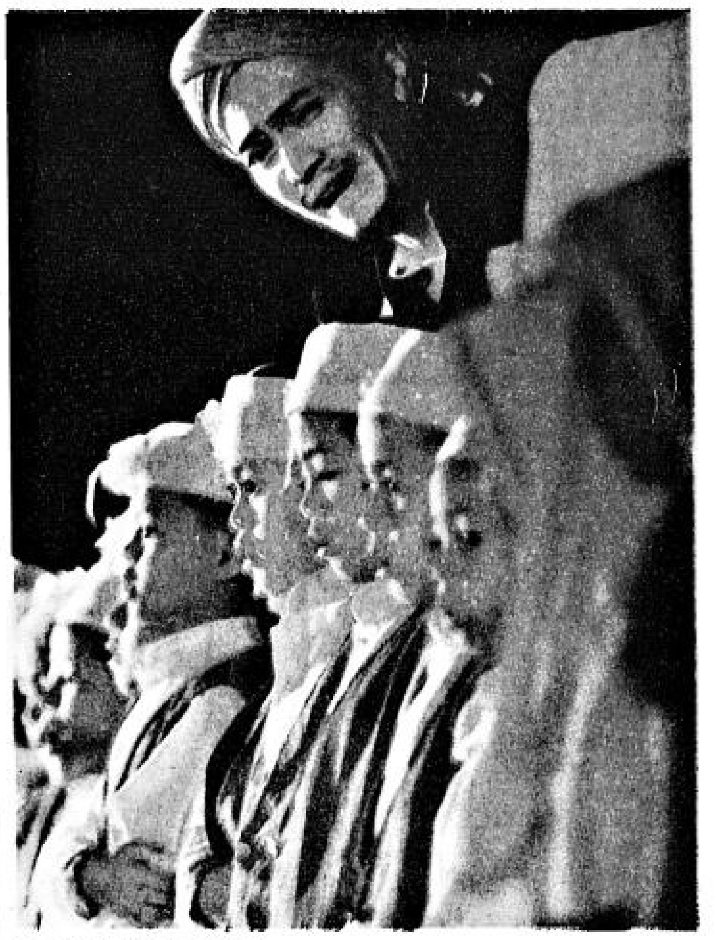
But his beatification has caused controversy in Austria, where Charles I is remembered for authorizing the use of mustard gas during World War I and where critics believe his elevation to be politically driven by the conservative right.

The Austrian press has ridiculed not only the emperor's political record but the miracle he allegedly produced to merit beatification. According to the Vatican, he cured a Brazilian nun of varicose veins after doctors had given up all hope for her.

Emmerick was born into a farming community in 1774, joined a convent and became famous for bearing the stigmata—the wounds to hands and feet suffered by Christ during crucifixion—after being confined to bed with a long illness. She died at the age of 50.

She is revered as a selfless worker in the biography provided by the Vatican, which says "she was always willing to take on hard work and loathsome tasks."

The poet Clemens Brentano became an admirer and visited her sickbed to record her visions. He published these after her death in a book titled "The Painful Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ" which inspired the actor and director Mel Gibson to make his film. *AFP*


MUSLIM CONCERT
Malaysian Muslims perform during Parti Islam se-Malaysia "Alternative Entertainment" concert in Kuala Lumpur Oct. 2. Malaysia's Muslim opposition, which says concerts encourage a hedonistic lifestyle, held one itself at the weekend, aiming to undo its party-pooper image and lure youths who rejected it in a recent election. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Sri Lanka peace bid suffers stillbirth

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka's latest bid to revive the peace process with Tiger rebels has suffered a stillbirth with the country's main opposition calling for a boycott of the new initiative, political sources said Sunday. President Chandrika Kumaratunga is due to launch a "National Advisory Council for Peace and Reconciliation" on Monday. But parties holding the balance of power in parliament, who can make or break a deal with rebels, will not attend. The main opposition United National Party (UNP) dismissed Kumaratunga's initiative and said the way to end the deadlock in the Norwegian-backed peace process was to start direct negotiations with the Tigers. Compounding the problems for Kumaratunga is a decision by Tiger proxies in parliament, the Tamil National Alliance, to keep away and instead insist on resuming peace talks based on the controversial Tiger self-rule proposals. *AFP*

Steam eruption shakes Mount St. Helens

SEATTLE, Washington—US volcano Mount St. Helens roared to life Friday, spewing a giant plume of steam and ash into the sky and raising fears of a new larger eruption. After letting off steam from its lava cap in a spectacular natural display, the rumblings stopped and the huge cloud quickly dispersed. But the burst of activity sent scientists scrambling to establish whether the volcano, which killed 57 people when it erupted dramatically 24 years ago, was holding another more powerful eruption in store. *AFP*

Call him Dr. Yudhoyono

BOGOR, Indonesia—You cannot call him "Mr President" yet, but you could try Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. While waiting to become Indonesia's next leader, the former general entered the classroom over the weekend to defend a doctoral thesis on poverty and unemployment—subjects that could not be more important for when he takes office on Oct. 20. Yudhoyono will soon rule the world's fourth most populous nation, but that counted for little in front of six examiners at the prestigious Bogor Institute of Agriculture, where he was grilled for three hours. *Reuters*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 4, 2004
27th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gal 1:6-12
Gospel: Lk 10:25-37

A teacher of the Law came and began putting Jesus to the test. And he said, "Master, what shall I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the Scripture? How do you understand it?" The man answered, "It is written: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus replied, "What a good answer! Do this and you shall live." The man wanted to keep up appearances, so he replied, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus then said, "There was a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him and went off leaving him half-dead.

"It happened that a priest was going along that road and saw the man, but passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite saw the man and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, too, was going that way, and when he came upon the man, he was moved with compassion. He went over to him and treated his wounds with oil and wine and wrapped them with bandages. Then he put him on his own mount and brought him to an inn where he took care of him.

"The next day he had to set off, but he gave two silver coins to the innkeeper and told him: 'Take care of him and whatever you spend on him, I will repay when I come back.'"

Jesus then asked, "Which of these three, do you think, made himself neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who had mercy on him." And Jesus said, "Go then and do the same."

Commentary

In the days of Johann Tauler (14th century) there was a movement in spirituality whose members called themselves "The Brethren of the Free Spirit." They believed that one should leave devotion behind as one pushed forward to a higher level of spirituality. Tauler commented, "The 'Free Spirits' believe that they have recognized the truth by their own false lights, and are borne up on the waves of their own self-love and self-esteem. These people give themselves up to a false passivity of their own, and express opinions which dishonor the Lord. They say that one ought to have advanced beyond devotion. You can be sure that a good person never considers that he has advanced beyond anything, however little or unpretentious it may seem, provided it is good. He may have come, through such things, to a more advanced way of prayer, but they are still as dear and as real to him as they ever were. He will consider himself inferior to everything, superior to nothing."

But genuine illumination, he says, "makes us sink down and melt away in all our nothingness and littleness. The brighter and purer the light shed on us by the greatness of God, the more clearly do we see our own littleness and nothingness. In fact this is how we may discern the genuineness of this illumination; for it is the divine God shining into our very being, not through images, not through our faculties, but in the very depths of our souls."

We cannot love or serve our neighbor from any other place. This alone undermines the ego and its hidden strategies.

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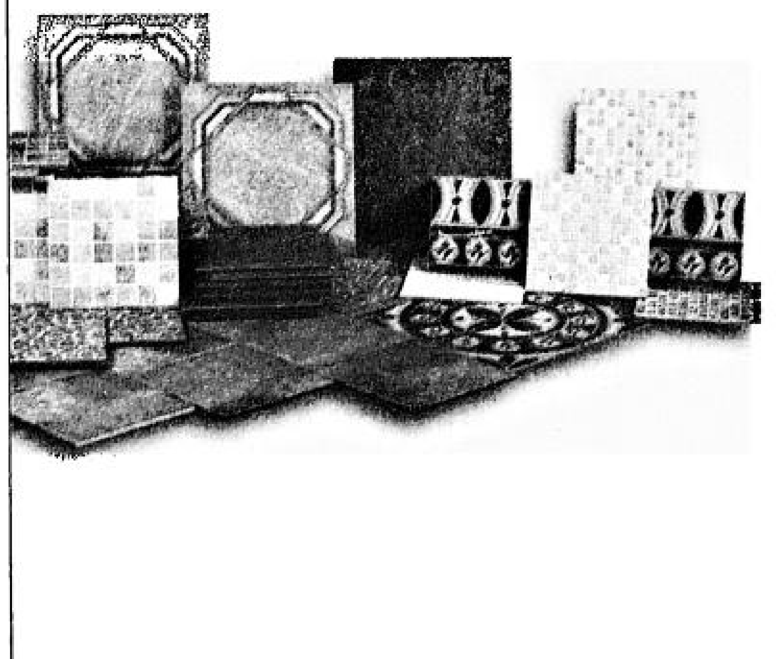

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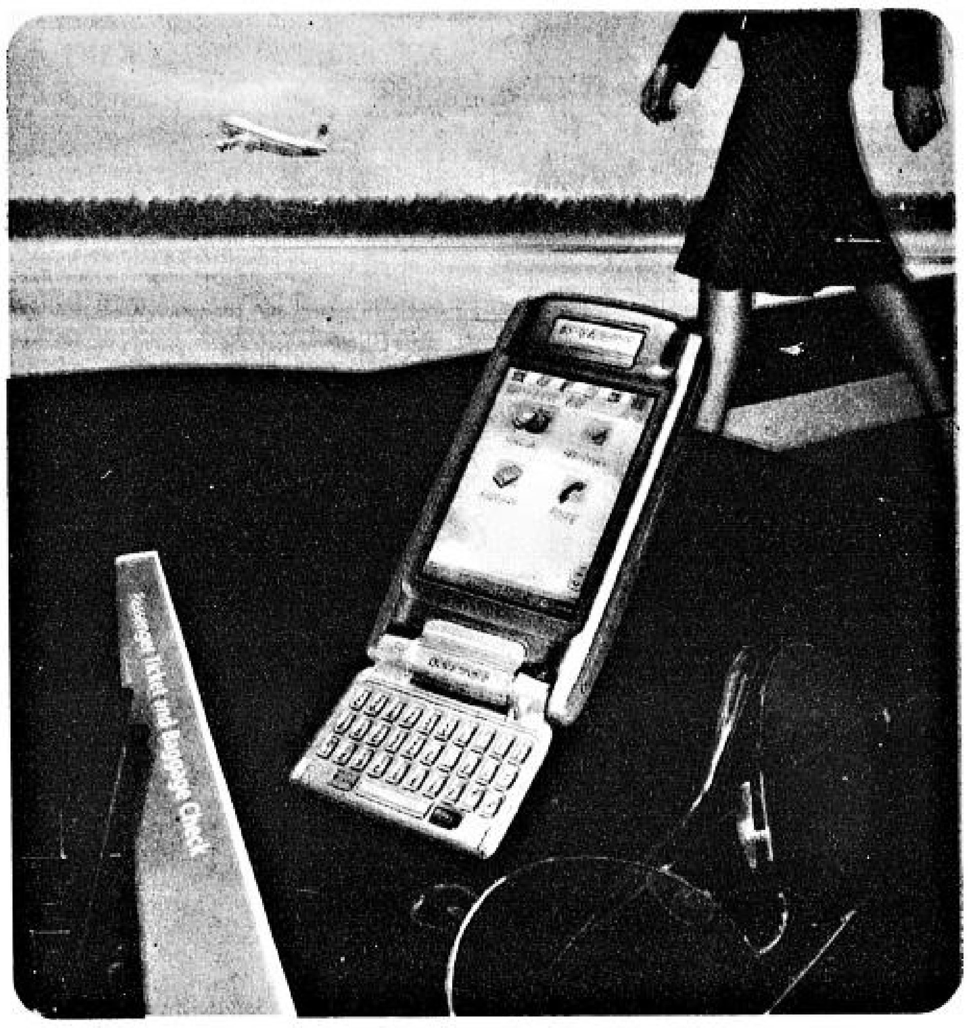

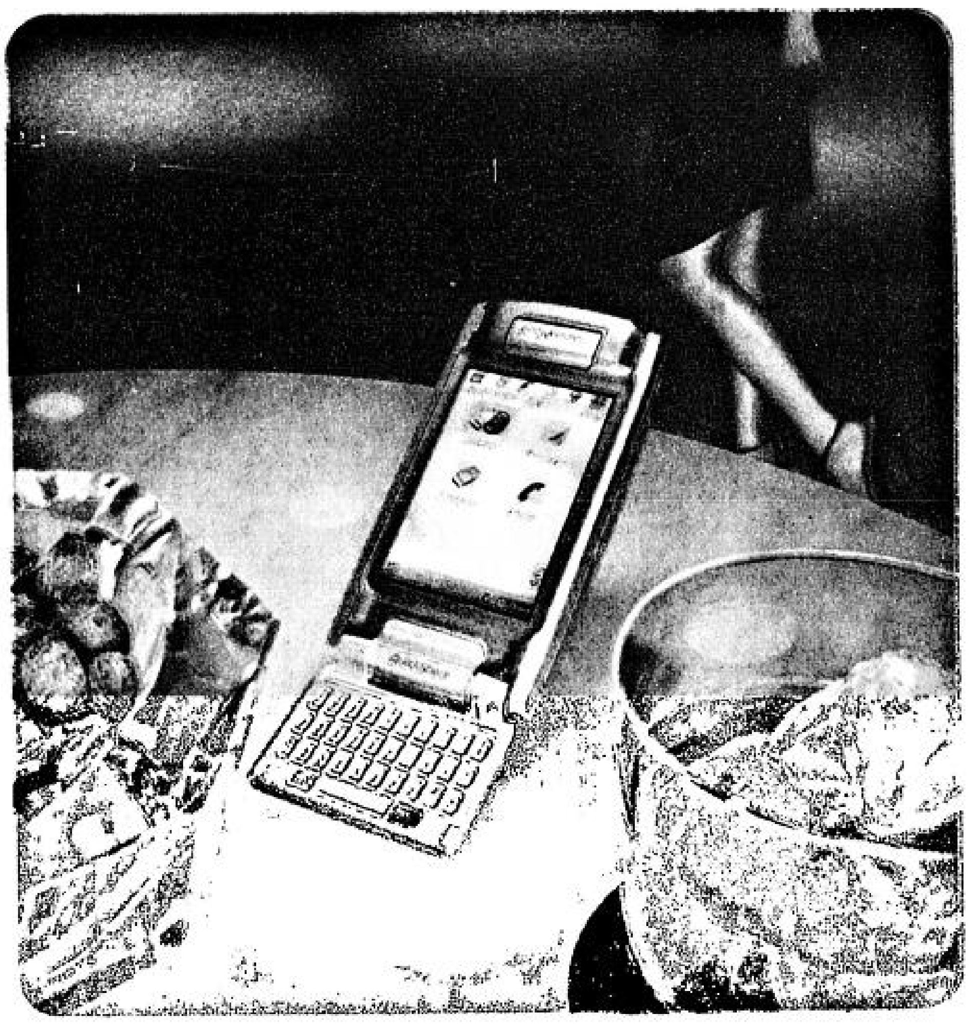

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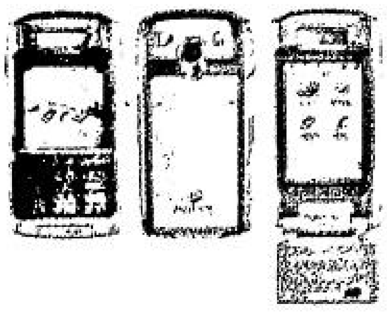

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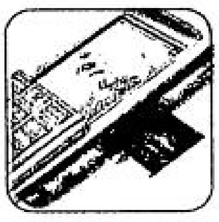

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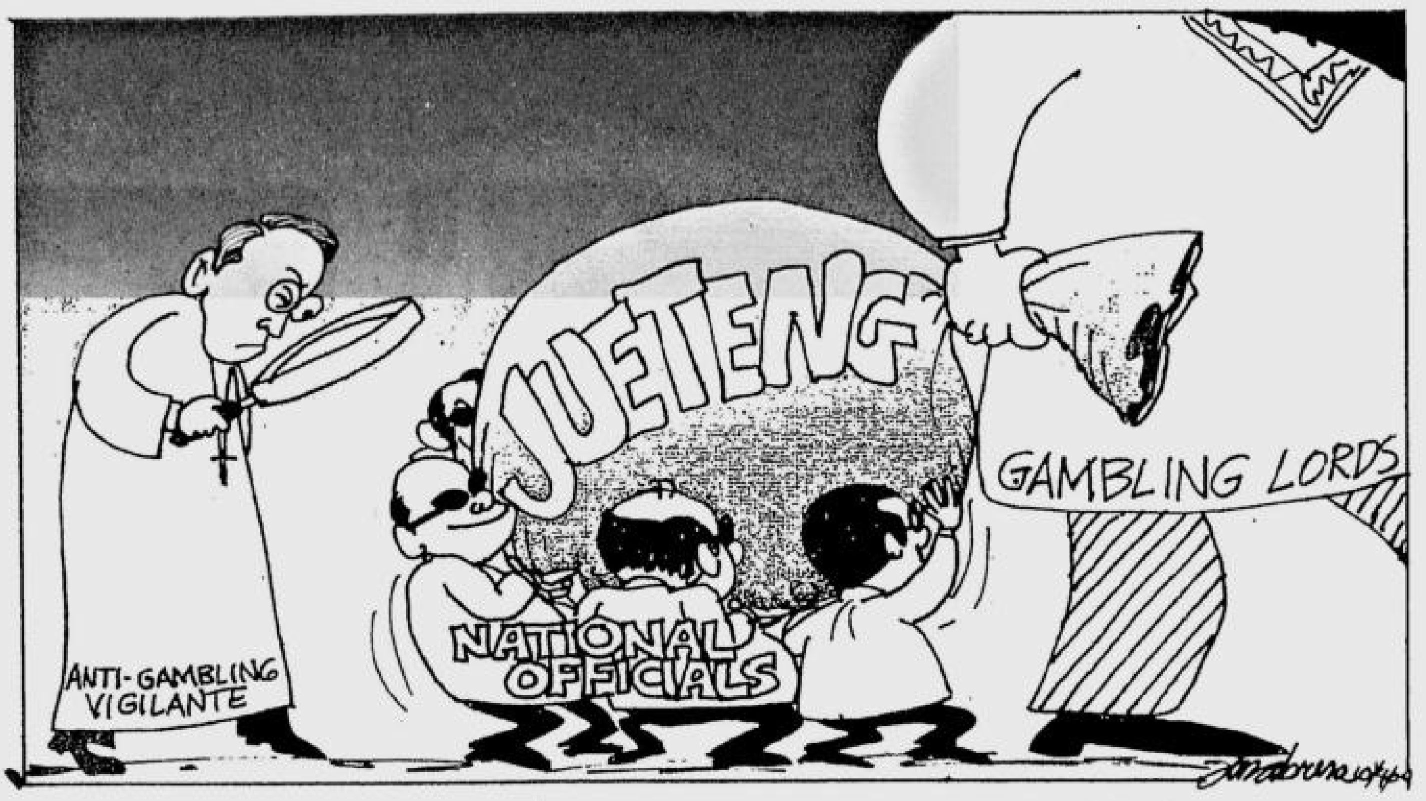

No amnesty

EDITORIAL

IT seemed like Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has put paid to the amnesty issue. "The cases against [the Magdalo mutineers] have been filed in court. They are already beyond the reach of the President," Gonzalez said last Friday. "There is no more means that I know of for us to drop or withdraw the cases."

But is amnesty beyond the reach of Congress? "The only possibility is to grant a general amnesty, but that is for Congress to decide and not for the President," Gonzalez explained.

This is the same tack that Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, once the chief presidential legal counsel, outlined last Wednesday. He attributed to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, a former defense secretary, the instruction given to defense and military officials "to discuss and study the mechanisms for amnesty because this may need the concurrence of Congress." But the lawyerly approach seems to be more of Cruz's style.

To be sure, Cruz did not say outright that he preferred the grant of a general amnesty. All he said was that he wants the court-martial proceedings against the Magdalo mutineers speeded up.

Another lawyer in the Arroyo administration, however, floundered in the treacherous waters of policy pronouncements. Last Thursday, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye issued a statement that began with the promise of amnesty. "We adhere to the principle of reconciliation with justice and amnesty is one of the instruments of this policy that can be considered."

But a second release of his statement on the same day omitted the second, amnesty-as-an-instrument clause entirely. Bunye also issued denials that the meeting that Ermita had called and that Cruz had described even discussed the possibility of amnesty in the first place.

"The subject of amnesty specifically [with regard] to the Magdalo officers was never taken up," Bunye told reporters.

Was he sending mixed signals? "We've been consistent," Bunye told reporters. "We're saying that the proceedings would have to be continued, would have to be terminated before we can talk about amnesty. Let's finish the proceedings first. First things first."

What does this all mean? We can be certain that the administration feels confident enough with its electoral mandate to re-imagine the whole Magdalo issue, to see it less as a sign of future restiveness in the military than as a symbol of a contentious past that no longer exists. We can also be reasonably certain that, having taken new measure of the issue, the administration has fashioned a new policy: leniency.

The signals spelling out leniency are not mixed, but clear as ice-cold water. The secret negotiations with representatives of the Magdalo leaders, the slyly worded apology of the junior officers who led the mutiny, President Macapagal-Arroyo's immediate decision to accept the apology, the flurry of news leaks about the possible grant of amnesty, the unchanging assumptions behind Bunye's many statements: all these point to a radical change in the way the administration now regards the Magdalo mutiny.

Should we be surprised that "mechanisms for amnesty" are under study? It is only logical, given the new policy. That the idea is being considered at all is already an unmistakable signal to those in the military who may still feel some sympathy for the mutineers.

But we can also be certain that, at least in this case, the administration has learned its lesson. It will not be seen as solely responsible for integrating the Magdalo mutineers back into the mainstream. It will not be perceived as pushing the amnesty agenda itself, which was what the first Bunye statement implied. It will work through and thus share responsibility with Congress.

In other words: Amnesty is in the cards, but someone else would have to deal from the deck.

It remains to be seen, however, whether the new policy of leniency (categorical in the case of the soldiers who were misled into joining the mutiny, subtle in the case of the mutiny leaders) will solve the real problem: bringing the boys back to the barracks. If leniency is not premised on true contrition, if it is not based on substantive confession, through the naming of the financiers and masterminds of the attempted coup, then we can be certain of one more thing: the new policy will fail.

Rivers and riverbanks as transport highways

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from last Wednesday)

DO you realize that we have so many problems because our policies are topsy-turvy? We have monopolies and oligopolies where there should be free enterprise: in the cement, oil, power, pharmaceutical and steel industries. And we have free enterprise where there should be government control: in land transportation, especially in Metro Manila.

There is anarchy in the streets of the metropolis because any Tom, Dick and Harry can buy a jeepney, bus, FX van or tricycle, bribe somebody at the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board or city hall to get a franchise, and let the vehicle loose on the roads. Anybody can buy a vehicle, park it on the street and nobody gives a s--t even if it contributes to traffic congestion. In Tokyo, you cannot buy a vehicle unless you can show a title to a garage or parking slot. In New York, you cannot park your car just anywhere.

You can erect your shanty on railroad tracks, or occupy train stations and make them your home and even convert them into commercial establishments (e.g, billiard halls), and the government will even sell the rail tracks right of way to you.

There are too many vehicles on the streets because foreign-owned car and motorcycle assemblers pour thousands of units out to the streets every year, but practically none is phased out.

Too many vehicles and too few streets, that's the big problem.

Yet there are alternatives to roadways staring us in the face but nobody sees them. In an earlier column, I mentioned the railroad which the Arroyo administration wants to phase out in Metro Manila. Yet we need effective mass transit systems to transport people.

And then there are the rivers and the seas that used to be our highways before we fell in love with the motor vehicle. It is surprising that the Philippines, an archipelago surrounded by water, pays so little attention to water transportation.

Not so long ago, commerce moved along the coasts and on the rivers on board barges, sailboats and bancas. Passenger ferries of the Magsaysay Lines were operating along the Pasig River, but they did not become popular because they were too small and too low in the water, and the passengers could smell the polluted water and did not feel safe in them.

The Pasig River is still a good highway. It is still used to transport oil and other products upriver on board barges. So why not try the passenger ferry system on the river again with better boats? Ferries used to transport guests at Disney World in Florida. They are just right for the Pasig River. They have a shallow draft so they won't run aground. They need only to be air conditioned so their passengers won't smell the stinky water. They will help immensely in relieving land traffic in Metro Manila.

All the world's great rivers in the biggest cities are being used as water highways. The Rhine, the Seine and the Volga in Europe, the Mississippi (United States), the Nile (Egypt) and the Amazon (South America) are not only highways but great tourist attractions. Thailand uses its rivers as much as its streets.

As a boy I remember watching, from the banks of the Tullahan-Tenejeros River, *cascos* loaded with vinegar, salt, nipa shingles and other products from Bulacan being poled downriver to the markets of Malabon, Navotas, Caloocan and Manila. We swam and played in this river in the old days. It used to feed the fishponds of Malabon and Bulacan with fresh seawater from Manila Bay. It is now an open cesspool because of the pollutants from the factories and squatters that line its banks. This is the same river that floods Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela during high tide.

I understand that a dike will be constructed along the riverbanks to keep the high tide out. The top of the dikes on both banks of the river might as well be constructed to also serve as new roads from Bulacan to Manila Bay. There are very few roads—and very narrow ones, at that—in Malabon. The dikes will give the people a new route to Bulacan. The MacArthur Highway is already too congested.

And if the river traffic is revived, people can travel to and from Bulacan on ferries, instead of on crowded buses and jeepneys, and arrive at their destinations relaxed, cool and fresh. The same ferries can go up the Pasig River and to the isolated coastal towns of Laguna Lake. And on Manila Bay, passengers can transfer to ferries bound for Cavite and Bataan. Thus, the coastal road, the Aguinaldo Highway and the highway to Bataan will be relieved of much traffic.

The easements on both banks of the Pasig River can also be turned into one-way streets from Manila Bay to Laguna de Bay, thus adding two more streets in Metro Manila. This will give street frontage to the lots along the river, thus increasing their value. Right now, the lots are just the backyards of the factories and lined with squatter shanties.

In Sydney, Australia, the banks of the river, from downtown Sydney to the sea, are lined with streets. The most expensive residences can be found along these streets.

And there are ferries coming from downtown to take residents home. You can watch a concert at the Opera House, board the ferry at midnight and arrive home in half an hour.

The development of river highways will have many other advantages: factories can no longer throw their garbage and liquid effluents into the river; squatters can no longer build their shanties on riverbanks; the rivers will be clean again; property values will rise, and local government units can collect more real estate taxes.

And the winner is

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE TEXT joke I got was: You can't envy the American voter. If he votes Democrat, he'll be caught between two johns. If he votes Republican, he'll be caught between a dick and a bush.

Well, if the debate last Friday showed anything, the John is better than the Bush. That was the consensus of most American surveymakers. John Kerry did so much better than George W. Bush. Good for Kerry who had been trailing Bush for some time now. Bush's charge that Kerry is a flip-flopper who can't make up his mind on Iraq and therefore is not fit to lead had proven effective. Thanks in no small way to media outlets, such as the rabid right-wing network, Fox, drumbeating the line. But almost overnight, last Friday, Kerry turned it around. For the first time, he had Bush on the run—or shriveling in the vine, to use a more appropriate metaphor.

I caught portions of the debate last Friday and felt an acute sense of déjà vu. I saw a similar debate a couple of years ago. I can only hope the results would be the same. That was the debate in Germany between the two candidates for prime minister, Gerhardt Schroeder and Edmund Stoiber. Before that debate, Schroeder, the incumbent, was trailing Stoiber, the challenger, by a mile. Schroeder had promised to end Germany's high unemployment rate when he won the first time but failed to deliver; joblessness worsened during his term. Of course, he had scored points some months before the elections by beating Stoiber to the flood-stricken areas in the east, wading in knee-deep mud to give relief to residents. But it wasn't enough to overtake Stoiber's lead.

Then came the debate. Schroeder did one simple thing. That was to promise voters Germany would not join the United States if it declared war on Iraq. It struck a deep sympathetic chord among the voters, the majority of whom had grown up in a post-Hitler culture that hammered the virtue of peace in their minds. It also struck a deep antipathetic chord in Washington and Capitol Hill, many American officials calling it a betrayal of postwar US-German relations. It was at least one promise Schroeder would live up to. Overnight, he erased Stoiber's lead and beat him in the elections.

More accurately, he beat him to a draw: It was his coalition with the Greens that won the day for him. But that is another—more complicated—story.

It would be poetic justice if the American presidential election went the same way. I half suspect it will be equally close, no small thanks to Bush's predilection—like his little brown sister Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's—for *dagdag-bawas*. Quite frankly, I don't know why Kerry has allowed himself to take on a defensive tack. He has no lack of things to accuse George W. Bush of to dispel the charge of being an obstacle to the war against terror. Bush's connections to the Bin Laden family, which Michael Moore highlighted in "Fahrenheit 9/11," easily come to mind. I don't know why it is Bush who has been on the attack, resorting to tirade and insult when he is the one most vulnerable to them.

Happily, Kerry has bounced back, and if he goes on to win the election next month, Bush will see this debate as the second biggest mistake he made in his life. The first, of course, was the Iraq War, which Kerry pounced on last Friday. The best part of it was when he answered Bush's charge of flip-flopping by saying in very even tones: "I've had one position, one consistent position, that Saddam Hussein was a threat. There was a right way to disarm him and a wrong way. And the president chose the wrong way."

I would tell friends last Friday night I thought that was Kerry's shining moment. As it turned out, most American viewers felt the same way. They gave Kerry the debate largely as a result of it.

Kerry was the clear winner in Friday's debate, and if he wins, I suspect the world will win, too. I did say when Mary Ann Wright visited here last month (she is the much decorated diplomat who resigned her post in disagreement over Bush's policies on Iraq; she is currently campaigning for Kerry) that I did not expect US policy to change dramatically under Kerry, Bill Clinton himself having continued the US policy of imposing an embargo on Iraq which led to the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi children. But any shift from Bush's 21st-century version of "manifest destiny," which is what his policy toward the world amounts to, should be a welcome one.

What suggests it would make the world a winner—indeed, what affirms Kerry's position that there is a right way and wrong way to deal with dictators—was the Arab reaction to the debate last Friday. The only ones who were not happy with Kerry's performance, worrying it might in fact carry him on to the White House, were the extremists and the heads of the autocratic regimes. The extremists want Bush to win because he is their biggest recruiter, in the same way that Marcos was the biggest recruiter for the New People's Army. And the heads of the autocratic regimes, like Saudi Arabia, want Bush to win because they do not like reformers who put pressure on them to recognize such democratic niceties as the citizens' rights.

True enough, there is a right way and a wrong way to deal with tyrants, who are to be found not just in Iraq. Bush's way isn't stopping tyranny, it is propping it up.

But you never know, life tends to be perverse. The truly strange thing is that Bush should be leading Kerry at all after a disastrous first term—one where he succeeded in pissing off just about everybody in the world, not least those who deeply sympathized with America after 9/11. But a friend of mine may have found the perfect explanation for it. The dumbest voters, he said, are not to be found in the Philippines.

They are to be found in America.

St. Therese gets her way

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CALUBIAN, Leyte—My husband and I decided to disappear from Manila for three days for a pilgrimage to the province; also, we wanted to see for ourselves how things are back there. The problem with Manila media is that we are often cut off from the realities in the provinces. Thus, I welcome every opportunity to get out there even for a few days.

We flew by PAL to Cebu City last Thursday and linked up with some friends for the two-hour ferry ride to Ormoc City. From there, we motored another two hours to the 5th-class town of Calubian in northern Leyte—just across the strait from Biliran—to the diocesan shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

It was meant to be a pilgrimage but, a half hour from Ormoc, the penance began as we traversed what people there refer to as "first-class rough roads." I understand the Veloso family, which includes the current third-termer Rep. Ed Veloso, has held political sway in Leyte's third district for 30 years. But the family appears to have forgotten the roads.

* * *

Until we met Rey Martinez, a PR assistant of Mandaue's Mayor Theodore Ouano, at the Cebu inauguration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, I had never heard of Calubian. Rey and his friend, Resty Seville, who owns a construction company in Cebu, were so kind to take us out-of-towners to the various functions for GMA's inaugural. One evening, at the People's Sinugba in downtown Cebu, Rey told us of the shrine he had erected in Calubian—with the help of some friends—in honor of St. Therese. He coaxed us to join her devotees there last Oct. 1, her feast day, during which Bishop Filomeno Bactol of the Diocese of Naval in Biliran (which has jurisdiction over Calubian) blessed a life-sized statue of St. Therese donated by *hermana mayor* Ellen Alve. Rey had already erected a small chapel, a pilgrim's center and a formation house for retreatants under the supervision of Calubian's parish priest, Fr. Vic Japson. He has also commissioned a Cebu artist to finish life-sized statues for 13 of the 14 Stations of the Cross spread out over several hectares. Calubian will be the focal point of the Holy Week observance in the region. Bishop Bactol celebrates Mass there every First Saturday, enduring the rough roads.

* * *

Rey's story is a remarkable demonstration of the power of this youthful saint, who died of TB in 1897 as a 24-year-old Carmelite; she is now one of the few women "Doctors of the Church." As Rey narrated to the sisters at the Carmelite Monastery of St. Therese in Gilmore, QC, when the saint's relics arrived in Manila in 2000, his interest in her was quite cursory; in fact he wondered why so many people were flocking to places the ornate reliquary traveled to. When the relics came to Cebu City, he and his wife trooped to the Carmelite monastery there, but they couldn't enter because of the huge crowds. Luckily an Air Force friend saw him and ushered him inside, where he was able to spend some time by the relics. Later the relics were transported to Mactan Air Base for airlift to Dumaguete, and his friend asked him to be a pallbearer.

* * *

That brief encounter got him "hooked" to the saint, and before he could understand what was happening, Rey was reprinting thousands of leaflets about St. Therese for distribution. He began reading everything about her, and on a business trip to the US, he carried an entire suitcase filled only with the leaflets; he also took them to China, Singapore and other places, distributing them in airplanes, airport lounges and buses. His friends, who knew he was not the "religious" type, were puzzled; in fact, some thought he had gone cuckoo.

He began planning a shrine for St. Therese in the property of his wife Wilma in Calubian, high up on a promontory with a breathtaking view of the straits and the mountains of scenic Biliran. It's truly one of the most gorgeous I've seen in this country. But Rey needed more land and the owner of the adjacent land didn't want to sell it to him. Rey left for Cebu, but as he was walking into his house, Wilma called from Calubian: the owner was giving the land for free for St. Therese! With the help of friends, who donated all kinds of materials, and the labor supplied by the townspeople, he finished the edifices in the shrine. Bishop Bactol declared it a diocesan shrine last year.

Rey needs just a few more things: to bulldoze a road so that people could drive up their vehicles; right now the only way up there is a steep 92-step staircase that, with the rough roads, constitutes real penance. He also needs another toilet with shower for the formation house and a Last Supper scene to complete his new Stations of the Cross for the coming Lent. Rey recounted a funny story that the Carmelites at Gilmore found so charming. The night before he was to travel to Calubian, he dreamt that the small statue of the Sto. Niño in his room talked to him. "*Talaga bang hindi mo ako isasama* (Are you sure you're not bringing me along)?" the Niño asked, looking quite dejected. Rey took pity on him. Today the statue adorns the little chapel at the shrine.

* * *

The shrine of St. Therese is putting sleepy little Calubian on the map. As I sat in the balcony of the formation house one morning, looking out on the emerald blue seas between that town and Biliran across, with its beautiful mountain range, I thought to myself: What a pity that our small coastal towns are not being discovered for tourism, which could lift the townspeople from poverty. Calubian's bachelor lady mayor, 24-year-old Hazel "Dayday" Po, served us excellent scallops topped with cheese and fried garlic. She said the best scallops are found in her municipality as the waters of the bay have just the right mix of salinity.

Unfinished business

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

THIS is the worst of times.

When you live in a country where things are not what they seem, and they become more surreal every day with every big news on television and radio, and in newspapers; and Winston Garcia, president/general manager of the Government Service Insurance System, digs a deeper hole with his every pronouncement; and you wonder in total amazement how Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye can say the things he says with a straight face; and you steadily lose control over your capacity to survive with the continually escalating prices; and those among us who dare protest are hosed down with water cannons while truncheons are wielded to crack their skulls and break their bones; and you feel that you and everybody else—except Garcia, Bunye and their ilk—are trapped in a tailspin down the tunnel of doom, while Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo sails off with wind in her hair, life without care, to go scuba-diving in her and Garcia's favorite place; what can you do?

Call another "people power," some are suggesting. I disagree.

We cannot afford losing again the best and brightest among our youth as we did 30 years ago. That will leave us with a future too dismal to contemplate, with no other alternative than the likes of Bong Revilla, Lito Lapid and Mikey Arroyo, all of whom, like Garcia, have been inflicted on us by Ms Arroyo.

Besides, the "Edsa people power" was when the Filipinos rose in full force to remove a dictator. In Edsa in January 2001, it was the so-called civil society rising in full force to install another one.

It is well for us to remember the day, 32 years ago, when Ferdinand Marcos proclaimed martial law. Unless we've been lobotomized, we should be able to see that we are now living in the grip of martial rule. The big difference between now and 1972 is that Marcos told us about it (although he lied about the date) and he had a mandate. Aside from that, Marcos, at least, was brilliant.

Today, our worst nightmare as a nation is again upon us, and proving this is Winston Garcia declaring, "I gave the order to disperse them," with the confidence and authority worthy only of a president, after the images of protesters being truncheoned, hosed and tear-gassed were shown on the TV screen.

It is well for us to remember. It is well for us to heed an old saying: "*Ang hindi marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makakarating sa paroroonan* (Those who don't look back to their origins will never reach their destinations)."

We cannot—like recently freed Malaysian former deputy Anwar Ibrahim—just say "It's over and we have to move on."

In our case, despite such pathetic stop-gaps as the so-called Bayanihan Fund, the much trumpeted "10-Point Agenda," the attempts at "reconciliation," we simply cannot budge from where we are mired because the way ahead is littered with the corpses of unfinished business, and the past relentlessly haunts us with its ghosts.

We have, for one, this messy habit of exposing wrongdoings with the enthusiasm of screaming banshees and then, just when we have the perpetrator by the neck, we drop him and devote our energies to finding out whether the P10,500 that Keanna Reeves said was her asking price, was for "*isang ganunan lang*."

Worse, we dismiss her truth with humiliating laughter, even as she has exposed all her emotional innards for our depraved entertainment.

Although talking of a quite different matter, it is worthwhile to quote Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes: "After damaging institutions...we just say *kalimutan na natin 'yan?*"

"We should not lose our capacity for outrage," Sen. Joker Arroyo tells us. "Otherwise, we will find ourselves morally and intellectually disarmed."

And so we do.

Has anybody been held to account for the atrocities of the martial law regime?

When Ms Arroyo vowed not to run yet she did; when she declared she was "married to the country," yet directed Mike Defensor to undertake the Great Helicopter Rescue; when Ms Arroyo emptied the government coffers for her campaign; when she appointed Benjamin Abalos to head the Commission on Elections to ensure her grip on the presidency; when the Gang of Four proclaimed the legitimacy of her presidency while we were sleeping; when she used her office to appoint all those to whom she is indebted, and thus we have a Winston Garcia who has become the metaphor of her kind of governance; we acquiesced as a people totally devoid of memory.

And so we have a lot of deadweights in our path. We don't know whose money was deposited in the Jose Pidal account, or whether there really was one. We don't know whether Abalos really did mess up the elections.

And we may never know whether Garcia really absconded with those billions of money that belong to the hundreds of thousands lowly government employees. Worst of all, we don't even know whether Ms Arroyo really won our mandate. But we do know that Keanna is all of 33 years old and was paid P10,500 for "*isang ganunan lang*."

It is because of this that we are carrying the heaviest burden of all: a leadership stripped of credibility.

In stressing the importance of character in leadership, John Maxwell said that people should trust their leaders. "If you lose that trust, you really lose your leadership," citing former US President Bill Clinton who, he said "lost his moral authority because he lied to the people."

"You should be able to believe your president," Michael Moore said in an interview. "If we don't have that, what are we left with?"

* * *

Comments to nm19@mysmart.com.ph

Making ends meet

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

MONEY is a mystery. It is so essential and yet making it can be quite a challenge. Saving it, in our hand-to-mouth economy, seems virtually impossible. For those with business background, making money may be a little less tough. But for those who don't have such background, making money, spending it wisely and putting something aside for either a rainy day or a comfortable retirement may seem an impossible dream.

There are, however, people who have made "making money easier for others" their business. One such person is Efren Ll. Cruz. Over the past 20 years, he has been involved in various aspects of fund management, the last nine years in the mutual fund industry. It was in mutual fund that Cruz learned a lot of lessons about personal financial planning. For some time now, he has taken to teaching the lessons he learned by conducting personal financial planning seminars for his mutual fund clients.

It became clear to Cruz during his seminars that many working people do not have access to the many ways there are for making money and saving it. It's easy to tell people to save and live within their means, but what of the details that modern living requires? How to compute net worth? What exactly to expect from their savings or checking account? Why do checks bounce? Or where and how to buy a bond? How to compute its returns? Making sense of the growing number of pre-need plans available—all these things can make the average person dizzy and disappointed. Investment professionals take for granted these details which, to most Filipinos, are frustrating and intimidating.

This realization led Cruz to write a book on personal finance. From pre-need plans to credit cards, from bonds to stock market, the book is a clear source of information for young urban professionals, overseas Filipino workers, or anyone who wants to get a handle on their financial future in a Philippine setting.

Aside from the book, readers who register their copy at the Platypus website (www.platypus.ph) are sent electronic worksheets to take the hassle out of number crunching and help them figure out which pre-need plan, loan, or insurance policy makes the most sense for them. One worksheet even helps parents find out how much they need to save for their child's college education.

The genius of Cruz's work is that it addresses issues and problems that exist in the real world, for Filipinos.

Here's some salient points from his book: From Chapter 2—"Milestones in your road map": "The best time to do financial planning is now—not tomorrow nor New Year's Day but now! While you're young you should:

"1. Pay yourself first by saving. Developing the habit of saving at an early age will be of great use in later years when there will be strong temptations to draw more from savings rather than add to them.

"2. Get as much life insurance as you can as early in life as practicable. Be aware, however, that you may have to change your beneficiaries as you get older and start your own family.

"3. Invest to better beat inflation. The beauty of investing, especially if you invest in fixed income instruments, is the magic of compounding. Compounding simply means that the interest on your investment earns interest itself.

"4. Avoid debt as much as is practicable. But if you do have to incur debt, shop around for the best rates, ask for the effective interest rate, get the shortest repayment period your income can afford, and repay debts earlier if you get windfall income.

"As you get older, events in your life will dictate some change in the way you run your finances. You may get married, raise a family, buy or sell a home, start your own business, fund a college education and/or fund your own retirement. The key to coping with all these milestones lies in the financial habits that you nurture early on in life."

From Chapter 3—"Who NOT to approach": "The Pinoy's naiveté when it comes to financial planning unfortunately leads to many problems. For instance, many scams plague the country, taking advantage of the Pinoy's urgent need to get out of poverty.

"Avoid pyramiding. Pyramiding is an operation whereby the sales agents earn primarily from recruiting other sales agents instead of selling products or services.

"A Ponzi scheme is another scam. The scam was named after Charles A. Ponzi, an Italian immigrant to the US who defrauded hundreds of investors in the 1920s. A Ponzi is a scheme whereby a person is promised an exceedingly high return on investment, when the money used to pay such returns merely comes from the principal investments of succeeding investors.

"On the debt side, avoid contracting too much consumer debt, like abusing credit card debt. Abusing the use of credit cards gives you a false sense of wealth since you don't immediately feel the drain on your resources when you swipe your card. You just get the unpleasant surprise when the monthly billing arrives.

"Also on the debt side are many informal micro-financing operations run by individuals and who charge very high interest rates. These persons can charge anywhere from a nominal rate of 3% to 20% per month with the interest based on AOR and/or interest paid for in advance (in other words, deducted from the loan proceeds from the start of the loan)."

If you think these nuggets are pure gold, think of what the whole book has!

* * *

FULL disclosure: "Pwede Na! The Complete Pinoy Guide to Personal Finance" is published by Platypus Publishing, in which I am a partner. For copies, please contact Shiella Ducay at + 630916 3005672 or e-mail sducay@platypus.ph for details. Or check out http://www.platypus.ph.

Quotable quotes

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

NEWS reports that contain direct quotes from news personalities are enjoyable to read. The readers get the feeling that the source of the statements is right in front of them.

Aside from putting an aura of authenticity on the subject of the news, the quotes give the readers an insight into the mind-set of the news source at the time he made the statements. Is he serious? Did he really mean what he said? Why did he say that?

The curiosity of a reader, Paul Paranal, was piqued by a direct quote that came out in the Sept. 24 issue of the INQUIRER. The news ("Palace defends mutineers") was in connection with the apology made to President Macapagal-Arroyo by the key leaders of last year's abortive Oakwood mutiny.

After learning of the expression of regrets, one of the mutineers' lawyers, Homobono Adaza, reacted with sadness, shock and anger over the young military officers' sudden change of heart.

He was quoted as saying: "This is a 360-degree turn from their previous stand. I have been taken for a ride. I thought they were willing to stand for what they believed in and what they saw was happening to this country. I can't understand this, given their stand, their principles and vision."

The reader took particular note of the "360-degree turn" phrase in the story. He wrote: "I find it irksome when I see misuse of idioms like that one. In turning 360 degrees, one returns to his original position. To recant is to turn 180 degrees. Having seen this in previous articles of the INQUIRER, I just wonder if this quote is for real, or a misquote, or an editorial lapse."

Direct quote

The reader is right. A complete change in one's position should be described as a 180-degree turn, not 360-degree. In the latter case, it is as if nothing has changed from where a person earlier stood.

Yes, the quote in question was made by Adaza. It was not drawn from thin air by the INQUIRER reporters who wrote the subject news report. The statements came straight "from the horse's mouth," so to speak.

Some readers will probably ask how an experienced lawyer like Adaza, who is known for talking English in rapid-fire fashion, can make that kind of grammatical mistake. Well, nobody's perfect. Even the best English professors sometimes commit lapses in the use of the language they teach.

What probably happened was Adaza was so emotionally affected by the unexpected action of his clients that he blurted out the wrong number when he tried to give a more graphic description of their move. Apparently, he opened his mouth before his brain cells had the opportunity to pick out the right words to use for that purpose. In any event, that slip of the tongue did not diminish the effect of the idea he wanted to convey to the reporters.

In fairness to Adaza, he is not alone in committing that kind of mistake. The reporters' notebooks are replete with notes about politicians who, thinking it is not classy to express their thoughts in Filipino, insist on talking in English that would make their English teachers turn in their graves with embarrassment.

Accuracy

The acceptance of limitations in the use of English is what makes Vice President Noli de Castro and Sen. Lito Lapid admirable. Aware that they are not proficient in the King's language, they talk in Filipino and, in the process, avoid gaffes in English that could make them the butt of irreverent jokes.

As a matter of policy, the INQUIRER does not change the wording of statements made by news sources when they are quoted in the reports. If they have inadvertently missed a word and its absence would confuse the readers, the missing word is supplied, but is placed in brackets, to alert the readers to the adjustment made.

The fact that the newspaper publishes a grammatically-erroneous quotation should not be taken to mean that it endorses the use of wrong words or sentences. The primary duty of the editorial staff is to report the events as they happen and that includes writing about the important statements made by the people involved in the news.

If the news source gets caught in some grammatical lapses, that's his or his PR handlers' own lookout. It's up to the public to decide whether to dismiss the booboo as trivial or consider it a matter of serious concern.

When a mistake of that nature sees print, the usual reaction of the person to whom the error has been attributed is to claim that he was misquoted or the reporter made it up. To avoid this finger-pointing, the INQUIRER requires its reporters to use, whenever feasible, their tape recording devices in their interviews, especially when controversial public figures are involved.

Native language

Sometimes, space limitations prevent a verbatim reproduction of the statements of news sources, especially if they are very long. It's amazing how

some public personalities are inspired to talk at length in the presence of reporters or TV cameras.

On these occasions, the statements are simply paraphrased, but extra care is taken to make sure the summary accurately reflects the ideas sought to be conveyed by the news source.

When the statements are in Filipino or in a native dialect, the reporter or editor concerned may either reproduce the statements "as is" and give the English translation, or rewrite them in English in their entirety.

The original wording is maintained if the words contain connotations or hidden meanings that can only be understood by a native speaker. Some words in Filipino or the native dialects cannot be accurately translated into English; there is therefore a possibility that something important might get lost in the translation, hence, the need to write the statements in their original form.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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A few good schools

QUALITY schools are fast becoming a rarity nowadays. The best schools charge very expensive tuition beyond the reach of minimum wage earners. Most schools have become diploma-vending machines, producing ill-trained graduates who are good at flunking board exams.

Profit, instead of imparting relevant knowledge and providing quality education, is prioritized in the management of schools. Courses are offered based on market demands rather than on the country's needs. Schools then maintain high enrollment in courses which promise employment abroad, such as nursing and caregiving. So while there is an oversupply of graduates in the field of health care, there is a shortage of qualified professionals in the fields of science, agriculture and engineering, which the country needs for industrialization.

On the other hand, computer schools entice students by promising them a high-paying career outside the country.

Only few schools remain true to the real mission of college education—to guide students in the pursuit of knowledge and truth and to train them to be responsible, principled, modern and productive citizens of their country.

The high cost of private education forces thousands of students to shift to public universities. This exodus has led to further deterioration of the public school system, even as it grapples with decreasing state subsidy.

Only a handful of state universities continue to give decent education. It does not help that politicians keep converting community colleges into universities despite inadequate resources, poor facilities and lack of qualified educators.

In other countries, completing basic education is sufficient training for the youth to secure employment. But the poor quality of elementary and high school education in the country makes it imperative for the young to acquire college education in order to learn more skills.

Many complain about the decreasing competitiveness of our students. Well, it is not always accurate to blame the students for this. We should also blame our schools.

—RAYMOND PALATINO,
vice president, Anak ng Bayan
Youth Party, 32-A Visayas Ave.,
Galas, Quezon City

Hoping for the revival of Cebuano movies

I WAS excited to read the article "Cesar Montano wants to revive Visayan motion picture industry" in the INQUIRER's Sept. 11 Saturday Special issue. It evoked fond memories of the past, when Cebuano films, the likes of "Luha sa Kalipay " and "Dimakaling" were being shown.

I cannot forget those films because it was my *kabayan*, Bert Nombrado, who played the lead roles in them. Neither Caridad Sanchez nor Inday Ranillo-Cortez, both of whom made it big in Tagalog films, could ever overshadow Nombrado who was one of the leading figures in the Cebuano film industry.

I met Nombrado here in Manila, when he was still alive. I asked him about the Cebuano film industry. He replied: "*Wala tayong laban sa Tagalog movies*. In the processing of the film, which is done in Manila, priority is given to Tagalog films."

Incidentally, the article on Montano's plan correctly observed that *bisaya*, the Cebuano language, is spoken "as far as Mindanao." In fact, in the Philippines, Cebuano is more widely spoken than Tagalog. It was through the influence of Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon, himself a Tagalog, that Tagalog was chosen as the national language.

Statistically, there are more Cebuano-speaking Filipinos than any other linguistic groups. In fact, Randy V. Urlanda, associate editor of Panorama magazine and a Tagalog-speaking Filipino born in Gumaca, Quezon, shares this observation.

It has been said lately that what is in Manila can also be found in Cebu. Gone are the days, therefore, when certain things could be done only in Manila. I hope and pray that film processing can be done also in Cebu so that Montano will not go through the frustrations Cebuano filmmakers experienced in the past.

—FACUNDO S. TALLO,
182/6 North 1st St.,
Talon IV 1749, Las Piñas City

A dialogue is possible

ASUNCION David-Maramba's column: "Again—is dialogue possible?" (PDI, 8/28/04) poses one of the biggest challenges facing the Church and the State today.

I agree with her. With USAID withdrawing its supply of oral and injectable contraceptives to the Philippine government, now is the most opportune time to persuade the private sector and the Church into establishing common areas of cooperation in the field of family planning.

The Church and the State agree on the need to improve the quality of life of the Filipina mother. However, the myopic approach of arguing over artificial or natural methods keeps our family planning program from moving forward. There is a need to refocus our perspectives relative to our concept of "quality life" (in the realm of spiritual or economic). Yes, a dialogue is needed.

May I suggest that we start by contacting and mentioning those individuals who would be willing to go into a dialogue? Yes, a dialogue is possible. Yes, we can make things happen!

—REY M. FUENTES,
rmfuentes2002@yahoo.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Inappropriate headline

THE INQUIRER'S Sept. 15 headline, "Napocor chief quits, leaves firm bleeding," seems very inappropriate. Used in the headline, the phrase "leaves firm bleeding" sent a key message that could stick in the minds of readers more impressionably, thus making it more inappropriate.

But the message is a subjective statement that negatively implies, albeit wrongly, Murga's accountability for the losses of the National Power Corp.

However, in the story, the INQUIRER highlighted President Macapagal-Arroyo's commendations of Murga's contributions to and outstanding performance in Napocor, such as the successful streamlining of the company and the resulting cost-savings, the strengthening of mechanisms for cost-reduction, and the value of his experience and leadership that "will be greatly missed." These portions of the story belie the headline the INQUIRER used. Yet, the headline's apparent negativity had its effect the very minute it reached public attention.

It should be noted that the INQUIRER's Sept. 11 editorial traced the root of Napocor's problems all the way back to the Marcos regime (the nuclear power plant fiasco), then to the Aquino administration's honoring of anomalous debts incurred in building the nuclear plant, then to the Ramos administration's hasty approval of expensive independent power projects, and then to the Arroyo administration's cap on the PPA (purchased power adjustments) charge in 2002.

I shall stop short of accusing the INQUIRER of sensationalism. But a shorter headline, "Napocor chief quits," would have probably sufficed. In this instance, the INQUIRER seems to have fallen short in meeting the journalistic demands for consistency and attention to detail.

—RAYMUND MURGA,
rymurga@yahoo.com

Less than P1 million

I REFER to the INQUIRER article, "Gov't fat cats under fire" (PDI, 9/16/04), which listed the top 100 government officials according to compensation for 2002 and 2001.

In the 2002 list, I came out as No. 97 with a "compensation" of P1,909,488.67. For the record, please note that the amount includes P1,168,332.47 of discretionary representation and transportation allowances. These were spent for official business expenses and not for my personal benefit. This can be confirmed, if needed, by the staff of the Office of the Secretary of Finance.

My actual compensation, therefore, for 2002 was P741,156.20 and not P1,909,488.67 as reported.

—JOSE ISIDRO N. CAMACHO,
former finance secretary

Bayan Muna contribution doubted

THE INQUIRER'S Aug. 29 editorial mentioned party-list group Bayan Muna's financial contribution, which came from its pork barrel, to the construction of the "three-story student activity center" at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. Having been a student at the PUP main campus in Sta. Mesa for eight years (high school and college), I was witness to the many significant as well as minor events that took place in our university since 1996. I am not sure, however, of Bayan Muna's act of generosity to the PUP.

I want to ask where in the PUP (main campus or branches) the "three-story student activity center" has been built? As far as I know, there is only a two-story building especially constructed for students in our Sta. Mesa campus. It is called Unyon ng Mag-aaral/Student Development Center. It was finished early in 2000, several months before Bayan Muna was accredited as a party-list group (there was only Bayan then), and almost a year and a half before it was officially proclaimed a winner.

Therefore, the Unyon ng Magaaral Building could not have been the student center Rep. Teddy Casiño is talking about. The PUP celebrated its 100th Foundation Anniversary this October and I do not know yet if our cash-strapped but overachieving "Premier University of the Poor" was able to construct more than one student center—with the help of Bayan Muna (which was accused by military officials of using its pork barrel to fund the New People's Army).

For the sake of our fellow students, I wish Casiño's claim is true. Otherwise, Bayan Muna should give up its pork barrel. The militant party-list groups can sustain themselves without the Priority Development Assistance Fund; just half of their representatives' total salaries will suffice.

—ENGELS C. DEL ROSARIO,
2986 Masikap St.,
V. Mapa, Sta. Mesa, Manila

SM decision a challenge to creativity

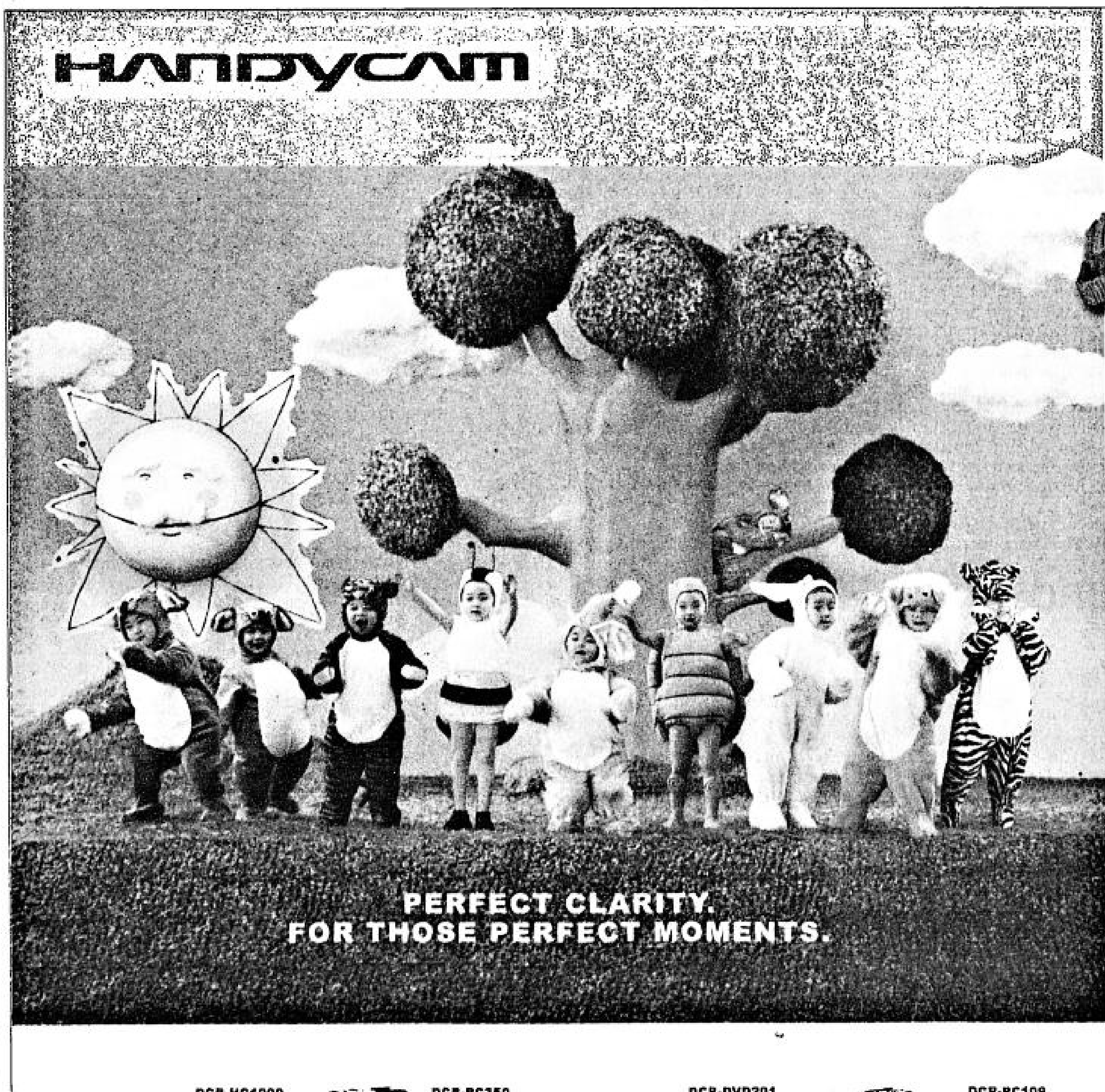
WE would like to commend and extend our heartfelt congratulations to the SM management headed by Henry Sy for its decision to ban R-18 movies from its theaters all over the country. SM's decision is a very big boost to our campaign for lasting moral recovery by promoting wholesome and clean entertainment with sound family values.

We hope that all the other malls will follow suit. This will help counteract the wave of sensuality, obscenity, impurity invading our customs, fashion and entertainment.

May SM's move awaken in all of us—especially the movie producers, directors, actors and actresses—to our common responsibility to promote clean, wholesome fun and entertainment and a culture of virtue. Far from killing our local movie industry, this surely will challenge them to grow in creativity and professionalism.

It is hoped that with this move, the actors and actresses will be more responsible in their behavior and serve as good role models especially for the youth. For, ethics and aesthetics are inseparable.

—AMELIA M. BONOTAN
AND 32 OTHER SIGNATORIES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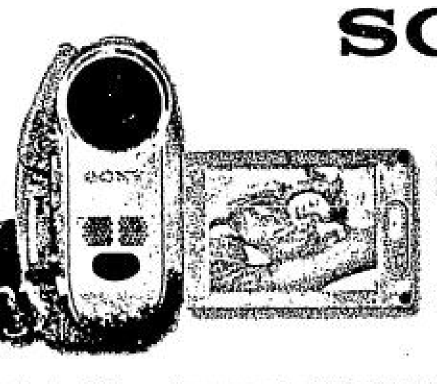
PERFECT CLARITY.
FOR THOSE PERFECT MOMENTS.

SONY



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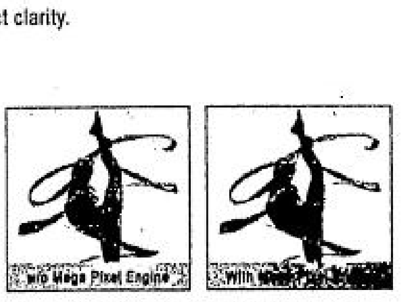

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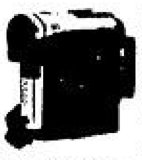

DCR-PC350
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- 3.0 Mega Pixels CCD
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- Touch Panel
- Hybrid LCD
- Smooth Interval Recording
- 3D GUI

DCR-DVD201
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- Mega Pixel CCD
- Mega Pixel Engine
- Carl Zeiss Lens
- Thumbnail Index
- Stamina Handycam

DCR-PC109
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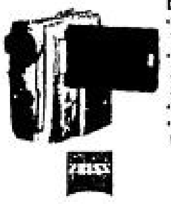
- Super NightShot Plus Infrared System
- 1.0 Megapixel (Gross) Advanced HAD™ CCD Imager
- 10X Optical/120X Digital Zoom



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DCR-HC85
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DCR-HC40
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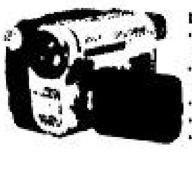

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Fire hits supermarket; 8 die

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Eight employees of a supermarket here were killed after the building was razed by a five-hour fire on Saturday.

Citing the safety issues and the high death toll, Mayor Oscar Rodriguez called the fire that razed the Popong's Suerte Mart in Barangay Sto. Rosario here the "worst fire" to hit this city in decades. Police said the supermarket is owned by local traders Marichu Choi and Tony Co.

The retrieval operations—hampered by the darkness and inadequate equipment and protective gear of firemen—started at 11:55 p.m. or almost three hours after the fire was contained. Arson investigators could not yet determine the cause of the fire.

Two bodies were found near a grill-covered window on the left side of a small room on the third floor of the supermarket.

On the far right, five more bodies were found. Two of them were in apparent tight embrace. The remains of the man were pinned under a roof that caved in.

The city government identified the victims as Joy Lugtu, 19; Genevie Dizon, 27; Victoria Malipico, 37; Alma Gonzales, 38; Emerita Koh, 41; Lerma Gutierrez, 26; and Marlene Miranda, 20.

They had worked for the supermarket from a year to 20 years either as encoder, finance officer and cashier.

The man, said to be a merchandiser, has yet to be identified. At 6 a.m. Sunday, nobody had claimed his remains yet.

When the retrieval operation was over at 3:50 a.m., the relatives and co-employees of the victims found it difficult to identify the dead.

Aided by a forensic expert from the police in Camp Olivas, the relatives entered the morgue of the Torno Funeral Homes at past 5 a.m. in batches to see the charred remains and look for clues to identify them.

A porcelain tooth, rims of eyeglasses, a burnt cellular phone, the marks of clothes, a necklace and a wallet gave out their identities.

The victims' relatives also raised questions on the capability of government firefighters and regulatory officials to prevent or deal with similar incidents.

Rodriguez said the supermarket was given a permit on Feb. 6, 2004 despite its "noncompliance with fire safety standards."

Councilor Jimmy Lazatin said as early as 1996, documents showed that the supermarket had several deficiencies, among these, "obstructions on the fire escape door." Members of the retrieval team said this door was locked when the fire occurred. They said the route leading to the door was narrow and blocked by merchandise. The windows, they said, had metal grills.

The fire spread to some shanties behind the old building, forcing residents in Purok 3 to evacuate and haul their belongings.

JP Basilio, who was among the first to volunteer for the rescue work, said he saw the victims all huddled on the third floor waving their hands for help.

"They could not get out. They were trapped. They were shouting for help," he said.

Firefighters tried to enter the building by destroying the window grills of the second floor, which served as a storage area for cooking oil and candles.

The big flames, according to Supt. Emmanuel Arrozal, provincial fire marshal, prevented rescuers from reaching the victims immediately.

"We need to prevent future tragedies likes this from happening," Rodriguez said.

He formed a committee and ordered an investigation of the cause of the fire and the probable liability of the supermarket owners.

Court dismisses poaching charge vs 14 foreign fishers

TACLOBAN CITY—The regional trial court here has dismissed the charges of poaching filed by the government against 14 foreign fishermen arrested off the coast of Guiuan, Eastern Samar last Aug. 19.

Judge Salvador Apurillo of Branch 8 gave weight to the claim of the fishermen, most of them Chinese, that they were in the waters off Guiuan on board a Taiwanese-registered vessel "Hasuda 1222" to take refuge from the bad weather.

In a Sept. 30 decision, the court described the entry of the fishing vessel as an "innocent passage" to the Philippine waters on its way to Indonesia.

Apurillo used as basis in dismissing the case the certification issued by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, which was submitted by the fishermen.

The certification said that while tropical storm "Lawin" was in the Philippines on Aug. 15 to 17, the southwest monsoon had caused strong winds and rough seas in the waters off Guiuan on Aug. 18 and 19.

Apurillo said "the vessel's fishing gear was not deployed and neither was there any catch of fish on board the said vessel when apprehended," which proved that the fishermen were not poaching as claimed by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

The fishermen, composed of 11 Chinese, two Taiwanese and Vietnamese, were arrested by the Coast Guard about 73 nautical miles off Sungi Point in Guiuan.

Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

₱2-M 'ghost' refo projects uncovered

ILAGAN, Isabela—The Commission on Audit has uncovered more than P2.3 million worth of unaccounted reforestation projects of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Cagayan Valley.

A 2003 COA report released recently showed that the DENR-Cagayan Valley had reported P2,320,037.88 worth of reforestation projects that could not be located or identified due to lack of documents or insufficient evidence that these were implemented.

"The composition or details of the different reforestation projects making up the recorded account balances closed to the government equity cannot be determined because of the absence of subsidiary ledgers and other supporting documents," the audit report said.

Antonio Principe, DENR-Cagayan Valley director, said his office had fully accounted for the reforestation projects implemented during his term.

He said his predecessors might have been the ones who implemented the unaccounted reforestation projects that were uncovered by the COA.

He said reforestation projects worth P1 million were coursed through his office and these did not receive any additional allocation or grant for such projects. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Panay execs oppose tax measures

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Legislators and executives on Panay Island has formed an alliance to oppose the eight proposed tax measures of Malacañang.

The first such group organized by local officials, the Alliance of Legislators Against Regressive Taxes (Alert-Panay) will campaign against the tax measures, which aim to raise P80 billion to help offset the government's mounting budget deficit.

The measures include a P2-increase in specific taxes on petroleum products, an increase in the value added tax from 10 percent to 14 percent, increase in taxes on tobacco and alcohol or "sin taxes" and increase in charges on fees on government transactions.

In a statement signed by around 50 municipal councilors, mayors, and provincial board members, the officials said the revenue measures will aggravate rather than solve the country's fiscal crisis.

"It is like strangling the people just to pay banks and creditors," said Aklan board member Ramon Gelito. He noted that the major cause of the country's financial problems is the huge debt payments.

Gelito said people especially in rural areas are already suffering from widespread poverty. "Businesses are doing badly because people are buying less and less and these taxes will only worsen the situation."

Iloilo board member Cecilia Capadosa, Alert-Panay head, said the tax measures will affect everyone regardless of their income.

The alliance is the first to be formed outside of Congress, said Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, guest speaker in the assembly of the alliance.

Casiño said 71 congressmen have joined Alert and have supported. House Resolution 91, which directs the House committee on ways and means to investigate tax leakages that have caused about P285 in annual losses to the government.

Instead of passing new tax measures, Casiño said the government should strictly implement existing tax laws and improve tax collection. He cited a study that a 15 percent improvement in tax collection would raise more than the amount targeted by the eight proposed tax measures.

The Panay officials are also opposing plans to suspend or cut the share of local government units in the internal revenue allotment (IRA).

"Any cut on the IRA is very disadvantageous to poor municipalities," said Mayor Jose Christopher Varona of Sebaste town in Antique. Sebaste is a fifth class municipality.

Capadosa said she would sponsor a resolution in the Iloilo board against the measures. Chapters of the Philippine Councilor's League have also launched a signature campaign against the measures, said Wilson Balingit, PCL-Iloilo treasurer.

4 die in Albay massacre; love triangle eyed

LIGAO CITY—All four members of a household in a far-flung coastal village here were murdered inside their house by still unidentified persons at 12 midnight on Friday.

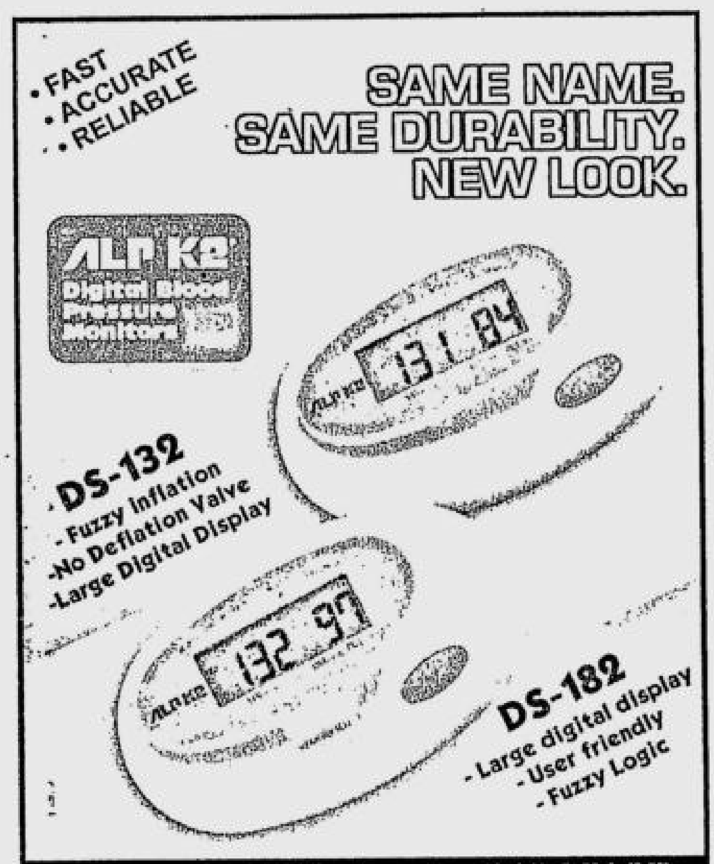
Chief Insp. Arnel Rabe, Ligao City police chief, identified the victims as Estemson Lominario, 65, his live-in partner Maritess Reynancia, 23, Maritess' daughter Abigail Cedeño, 6, and Lominario's daughter Rose, 3.

Rabe said a report showed that a group of men were allegedly drinking in front of the victims' house in Purok 1, Barangay Kabarian, some 40 kilometers from Ligao City proper, before the incident happened.

The victims suffered deep wounds in their necks and bodies, which instantly caused their death, the reports said.

Supt. Guillermo Paguio, Albay police director, also said an initial report pointed to a certain Jojie Cedeño, Maritess' former husband, as the primary suspect.

The police were still investigating the killings, with love triangle as the probable motive. *Michael Jaucian, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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Mirant expansion in Quezon hit

LUCENA CITY—An official of Pagbilao, Quezon and an environmental group are against the expansion of the 700-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Barangay Ibabang Polo.

Pagbilao Councilor Juan Zaporteza said the local government has an approved resolution opposing any new power plant in Ibabang Polo.

Mirant officials announced last week a plan to expand its coal-fed power plant in Pagbilao to 350 megawatts with $300 million investment.

"These expansions, which are in an advanced stage of development and subject to our obtaining all the needed clearances, should be operating in early 2008 in time to meet the projected capacity shortfalls in Luzon and Cebu," Ed Bautista, president and chief executive officer of Mirant Philippines, said in a statement.

But Zaporteza said the additional plant should first have the approval of the local government and the residents in a series of public hearings.

"No public hearings have been conducted for the purpose," he said.

The power plant has yet to settle the back taxes it owes the local government amounting to P3.6 billion, he added.

The Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon, a public interest environmental law office here, said it would also oppose the planned expansion.

"No more coal-fired power plant in Quezon," lawyer Asis Perez, director of Tanggol Kalikasan said in phone interview.

But Perez admitted that his group has no data on any possible environmental damage caused by Mirant's operation in Pagbilao.

"Yes, there were reported cases but we don't know what happened. But since it is coal-fired plant, we're sure it will really cause damage to the environment because of its carbon emission," Perez said.

If there is really a need for additional power plants, he urged the government to source it from indigenous materials like natural gas.

"It is cheaper, environment friendly and we have lots of indigenous energy reserve," he said.

But Bautista assured that the new plant will use state of the art clean coal technology (fluidized bed technology) as well as the latest environmental mitigation measures that will ensure environment friendly operations.

About 600,000 metric tons of local coal per year will be used once operations begin, the Mirant official said.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, said the expansion would help avert any power supply shortfall in the next few years. He said it takes about three to four years to build new power plants.

"In the case of Luzon, projection shows that Luzon would need additional power supply by year 2008," Perez said in a statement.

Mirant, the biggest private producer of electricity in the country, owns and operates over 2,500 MW of generating capacity.

The expansions would be undertaken by Mirant Global Philippines Corp., a joint subsidiary of Mirant Philippines and Global Business Holdings Inc. of the Metrobank Group. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Dengue kills 8

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Dengue has killed at least eight people, five of them children, and afflicted 1,388 others in seven Central Luzon provinces, the regional Department of Health said in a report released last week. The virus, spread by the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, killed six in Pampanga and two in Bulacan, the report for the January-Sept. 11 period showed. In Pampanga, the deaths from dengue were monitored in Barangay Cansinala in Apalit town, Betis in Guagua town, Pio in Porac town, and Caduang Tete and San Gabriel in Macabebe town. In Bulacan, the two deaths were recorded in Barangay Pulong Buhangin in Sta. Maria town.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Cop shot dead

CEBU CITY—A policeman involved in the anti-drugs campaign, was shot dead last Sept. 24 in Argao, Cebu. PO1 Julius Amarillo, 32, died from a bullet wound in the head fired by one of the two assailants in Barangay Canbanua, about 25 meters from his home. The policeman was a member of the police task force on Anti-Dangerous Drugs Enforcement and Crack Team in Argao. Argao Mayor Wilfredo Caminero said the killing came a few days after Amarillo hit one of the alleged thieves arrested by the police due to the suspect's rude behavior.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Village dad held for rape

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A village official who bragged to have sired at least 17 children with eight different women was arrested Sept. 27 on rape charges. Antonio Armilla, a councilor of Barangay Fatima here, was accused of sexually abusing a neighbor he offered to help in 2003. The complaint filed by a woman before a local court in Digos City in Davao del Sur, said Armilla volunteered to help her settle a case filed against her brother, but in the process forcing her to have sex with him. Armilla said he and his accuser were lovers and that she could have been influenced by those who have an ax to grind against him. He said they have a child.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Indonesian nabbed for piracy

DAVAO CITY—An Indonesian national and two Filipinos were arrested for their alleged involvement in piracy in the waters of Davao del Sur. Supt. Nestor Quinsay, Davao del Sur police director, said the suspects, Miki Talamigis, 23, of Bitung, Indonesia; Relly Ravaja, 24, and Manuel Yanos, 21, both of Barangay Tinago in General Santos City, were arrested while aboard an unregistered boat off Jose Abad Santos town in Davao del Sur on Wednesday. Quinsay said the Indonesian national and his Filipino cohorts were brought to the provincial police office, where they were identified by some of their victims.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ex-cop held for smuggling

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Authorities arrested a retired police official during a raid in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi on suspicion of involvement in gun smuggling. Chief Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, police director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said retired police Supt. Sarras Gadzali of Jolo, Sulu, was arrested by joint military and police operatives aboard the MV Evergreen of Asia, which docked at the Bongao Pier from Siasi, Sulu Friday. Ikbala said recovered from Gadzali's possession were at least four .45 caliber handguns, a .38 caliber revolver, a rocket grenade tube, and various types of ammunition. He said Gadzali was still being interrogated.

Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Batangas resort owners warned on security

NASUGBU, Batangas—Police authorities and officials of a beach resort homeowners association here have warned the members of the group and their guests to be extra careful after a family member of a homeowner was hacked with a bolo by a would-be robber on Sept. 25.

The Nasugbu police said it received a telephone call on Sept. 25 from a certain engineer Sosa who reported that there was a stabbing incident at Sitio Tali Beach, Barangay Balaytigue here.

Police composed of SPO1 Benilo Bay, SPO1 Godofredo Magaling and PO1 Leandro de la Vega immediately proceeded to the place to verify the report and conduct an investigation.

Based on the team's report, at about 9 p.m., Sept. 25, one Sarah Brodett-Sia, a resident of No. 8 Marina Drive, Tali Beach, Barangay Balaytigue here, was wounded when hacked on her back with a bolo by a bonnet-wearing suspect who fled after the incident with the weapon used.

Brodett-Sia, 29, married and businesswoman, was immediately brought to the Nasugbu Doctor's General Hospital for treatment and later released after given medical attention.

Initial investigation by the police showed that the victim had just left her bedroom and after a few steps, the suspect, who had gained entrance unnoticed to their beach house, held her neck from behind.

Sensing danger, Brodett-Sia managed to free herself, and ran back to her bedroom but was chased by the suspect and hacked at her back before she could enter the bedroom.

The wounded victim was able to shut the door but the suspect tried to open it. She said she shouted, which called the attention of her companions who ran after the suspect who fled through the grassy, dark portion of the area.

Police combed the adjacent beach house compounds and shorelines for the suspect but to no avail.

Officials of the Tali Beach Homeowners Association have warned its members to be extra security conscious, according to a homeowner interviewed by the INQUIRER, who requested not to be named.

He said Brodett-Sia's case was not the first to happen in the area.

Arlene Javier Ona, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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Kerry gets campaign back on track after debating Bush

From page A1

opinion poll, Bush was leading narrowly with 51 percent to Kerry's 45 percent.

Whether the debate results would turn the tide for Kerry is far from certain. But an independent commentator, Tim Russert of NBC News, described Kerry's performance as his "second coming," after the senator had been ridiculed by his fellow Democrats for running a "lackluster" campaign.

The Iraq war dominated the theme of the debate. The verdict of media commentators was that both Bush and Kerry had avoided gaffes that would have spelled disaster for either candidate, and that the debate crystallized the sharp differences in their respective approaches to the war. The debate also showed the strikingly contrasting styles of the two rivals.

The debate was viewed by an estimated TV audience of up to 50 million in the United States, and a million others in Europe and Asia, including the Philippines.

Europeans, Asians

Kerry was a seen as the clear winner by the Europeans and Asians. In France and Germany, which opposed the US-led invasion of Iraq, Kerry's promise of a multilateral US foreign policy was welcomed.

Prior to the debate, a French opinion poll said 90 percent favored Kerry. Andre Kaspi, an expert on the United States at Sorbonne University in Paris, said: "There is no doubt that international support for the US has fallen a lot in the last four years—in France particularly, but this is a global trend and it is also very strong in the Arab world."

In Russia, Italy and Sweden, media websites declared Kerry the winner in the debate. But a commentator in the Swedish tabloid, Aftonbladet, said: "It wasn't a knockout victory, but Bush was groggy afterward."

A commentator on Germany's N24 news channel said: "Kerry seemed to show that he had the stuff to be president. He had more facts in his head, and he was able to explain his position in Iraq. He is back in the race."

"No knockout blow," was the verdict of BBC, which said Kerry struck "some serious blows against the president in his handling of the war in Iraq, but Bush didn't make any serious gaffes that could have left a serious opening for the challenger."

In Russia, one commentator said: "Frankly speaking, for a (sitting) president, Bush looked quite weak. He was defending himself. He wasn't attacking much … At some points, he had to justify himself."

A viewer in Singapore was reported saying, "I don't think Bush did such a good job on the issues. He seemed to waver."

Taking a more aggressive position and apparently following the advice of former US President Bill Clinton, Kerry went on the offensive, accusing Bush of leaving US alliances around the world "in shatter" and calling Iraq "this incredible mess."

Scowling, frowning

As Kerry relentlessly attacked his rival's war record, Bush appeared defensive and the camera caught him scowling or frowning.

Kerry appeared more decisive and argued with more focus and with short sentences, discarding his rambling style that has been criticized as better suited for seminars than for the slash-and-cut debates of a political campaign.

Kerry appeared well-prepared and quick on his feet with arguments that turned the tables on Bush.

Bush's style brought to mind a cowboy in a Western movie, quick on the draw. Bush came to the debate against the backdrop of the escalating insurgency in Iraq and mounting American casualties.

NBC News said: "We have, for the first time in this campaign, engaged the debate in a real way. People know now there are serious, profound, real differences between George W. Bush and John F. Kerry on Iraq."

Bush attacked Kerry as a politician without core convictions, pointing out that his opponent had repeatedly flip-flopped and changed his position on Iraq. Bush said Kerry had voted to authorize the war but now criticized it.

Kerry replied, summing up Bush's strategy for Iraq as "more of the same."

"This president has made, I regret to say, a colossal error of judgment. And judgment is what we look for in the president of the United States of America," he said.

Bush acknowledged that not every American agreed with his decisions, but said "people know where I stand." He suggested that people didn't know where Kerry stood. "People out there listening know what I believe."

Bush slammed Kerry for saying it was the "wrong war at the wrong time in the wrong place," adding: "What message does that send to our troops? Not a message a commander in chief gives."

Repeating this line of attack, Bush said Kerry favored an $87-billion spending bill for Iraq and Afghanistan before he voted against it.

Kerry replied, "Well, you know, when I talked about $87 billion I made a mistake in how I talked about the war. But the president made a mistake in invading Iraq. Which is worse?"

Cheap shot

In a cheap shot, Bush dragged France into the debate by accusing Kerry of withholding support for American troops and offering to turn over decisions about the nation's security to other countries. "The use of troops to defend America must never be subject to a veto from countries like France," he said.

But Kerry described Bush as someone unwilling to acknowledge realities in Iraq that experienced another bloody day on Thursday and who had made a series of wrong decisions, from rushing to war to failing to develop a plan for peace to shattering relations with US allies.

Addressing the issue of an alleged character flaw that would disqualify him from serving as commander in chief who might be sending mixed signals to the troops, Kerry said: "It's one thing to be certain, but you can be certain and be wrong."

He said: "I have a difference with this president. I believe we're the strongest when we reach out and lead the world and build strong alliances. I have a plan for Iraq. I believe we can be successful. I'm not talking about leaving. I'm talking about winning. And we need a fresh start, a new credibility, a president who can bring allies to our side."

Newsweek …

From page A1

Newsweek poll had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Bush led 49-43 in the poll in early September and posted an 11-point advantage over Kerry in the poll following the Republican convention.

Now Kerry enters a critical 10 days. He still has two more debates with Bush on Oct. 8 and 13. A vice presidential debate is scheduled on Tuesday.

Bush aides had hoped their man would nail Kerry in the first presidential face-off on Thursday—and effectively end the race. But now they must be wondering whether Bush had played his trump card too soon after pushing for the initial debate to be on foreign policy, supposedly his strongest point.

According to the Newsweek poll and other snap surveys after the debate, Kerry emerged the clear winner and dented support for Bush's stewardship of the Iraq war and the global antiterror campaign.

Although some analysts scored the event a draw, the debate evidently changed the dynamic in the race and presented voters with a clear choice.

According to some observers, Kerry has closed the credibility gap with Bush, who has the power, prestige and trappings of the presidency to lord it over his opponent.

More confident

Kerry's performance in the debate seemed to release weeks of pent-up tension, as he appeared more loose and confident on the stump.

"I have always had a feeling about the end of September when the leaves begin to change, the air gets a little cooler, my political juices start to flow," Kerry said at a fundraiser with wealthy donors on Saturday night.

Aides said Kerry would now link Bush's perceived failings over Iraq to his alleged mismangement of the economy.

"Time and again, George Bush has proven that he's stubborn, out of touch and unwilling to change course … He confuses staying in place with leadership," Kerry said in Florida on Saturday.

"But it's not just in Iraq. Over the past four years, he has made a series of serious misjudgments here at home," he added.

Bush spent the two days following the debate claiming that Kerry would offer foreign powers a veto over US national security.

Democrats, defending Kerry's warning that such military action should satisfy a "global test" of being comprehensible to both Americans and foreigners, branded Bush's claim an outright lie.

'Misunderestimated'

It would be wise for Democrats, however, to remember that Bush had been "misunderestimated" before—to use one of his most celebrated gaffes.

The electoral math still seems stacked in favor of Bush, who appears assured of at least 210 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win. Kerry has about 186 electoral votes.

Thirteen swing states with a total of 142 electors are still up for grabs. Kerry, however, is struggling to hold onto states won by Democratic candidate Al Gore four years ago.

"All along we believed that it's going to be a very close election," Bush adviser Karl Rove said. Republicans are hoping Bush will put in a more polished performance at the next debate after he was caught scowling in cutaway shots at the University of Miami on Thursday.

Friday's debate is a town-hall style meeting, which may play into Bush's ability to connect with average Americans. Kerry has struggled with that format.

But there must be some concern that Bush's tried and tested tactic of sticking relentlessly to his core message has come unstuck. *Reports from AFP and AP*

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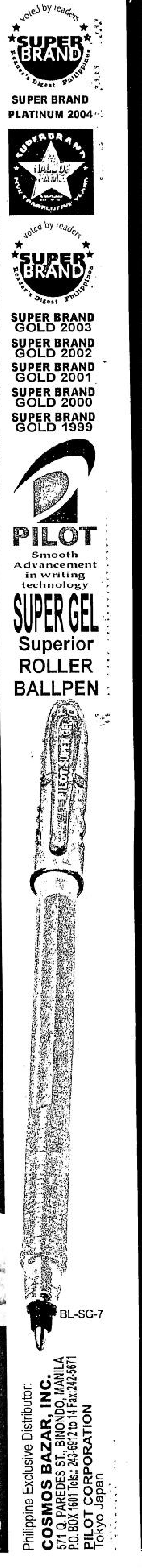
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Bishop . . .

From page A1

He said he would reveal the names of the four national officials only to Aglipay. "The moment we are ready, we will submit the names to him," Cruz told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Noli de Castro

Cruz said he would also seek the support of Vice President Noli de Castro in fighting jueteng.

The archbishop recalled that of all the presidential and vice presidential candidates from whom Krusada had sought a commitment in the fight against jueteng during the campaign, only De Castro and actor Fernando Poe Jr. had signified their interest.

Cruz said he had written De Castro to "follow up" on his pledge of commitment, which the Vice President signed early this year.

"We could invite him to join us in a press conference, where he can ventilate his ideas and plans about jueteng," Cruz said.

He, however, said he was not inclined to tell De Castro the names of the four national officials on the take from gambling lords.

"Those who get big fat jueteng payola know who they are. No need to tell them their own names. And those whose hands are clean, no need either for them to be worried—much less to be curiously defensive," Cruz said in a statement released by his Dagupan office yesterday.

Appalling

Cruz said he was appalled that the government was spending so much on intelligence work but did not know the people in the jueteng world. "Where has all its multibillion-peso intelligence fund gone?" he asked.

He said Krusada could not do the government's job because "it has no initial funds and no investigative arm. It is but a Hail Mary movement."

In Baguio City, Mt. Province Rep. Victor Dominguez said he could not believe that only four officials, as Cruz had said, were involved in jueteng.

Dominguez said he would file a bill to legalize jueteng to raise revenues for local governments, despite Malacañang's opposition to the proposal. *With reports from Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Palace to 15 GOCCs: Shape up or face ax

From page A1

penses, the excessive salaries and perks of their directors and management (PNOC accounts for three of the five highest paid government officials), and the multibillion-peso subsidies that they receive to sustain their operations.

In a preliminary report to the President, Boncodin blamed the massive losses of the GOCCs and the GFIs on low collection efficiency, heavy government guarantee exposure, insufficient corporate funds to cover their operations, maintenance of losing subsidiaries, and charters that restrict the corporation's capacity to raise revenues.

Boncodin said the DBM and the Department of Finance would first review the operations of these GOCCs and GFIs before making a final recommendation to the President.

Under the government's game plan, all subsidies to these GOCCs and GFIs will be stopped and their management will be asked to come up with strategies to make their operations viable.

The budget secretary said the government was not setting a deadline for reforms but officials wanted the changes to start "as soon as possible ... maybe do it this year."

Special consideration

Boncodin said special consideration would be granted to a few of the GOCCs, such as the National Food Authority (NFA), which "were set up by government to help specific marginalized constituencies."

The NFA is the biggest money losing GOCC (P7.6 billion in net loss in 2003) after National Power Corp. (Napocor). Napocor, which lost P113.2 billion and owed creditors P1.3 trillion in 2003, is not on the list, but it is up for privatization.

Defending the losses of NFA, officer-in-charge Gregorio Tan Jr. had said the agency should not be expected to post profits because its mandate was not to make money but to ensure food security. The NFA buys *palay* (unmilled rice) from farmers at a subsidized price and sells rice to consumers at a lower than market price.

No mass layoffs

Among the options that the GOCCs could undertake to avoid abolition are the following: privatize their assets; increase their fares; transfer their marketing, promotions and regulatory functions to well-run GOCCs; merge with other GOCCs, or convert into a regular government agency.

Boncodin assured the employees of the GOCCs and GFIs that "there would be no mass layoffs resulting from the rationalization program.

"The welfare of these employees are of major importance to us," said Boncodin, who unveiled last week a P30-billion "silver parachute" program to entice government employees to go into early retirement.

The plan to abolish the GOCCs comes on the heels of the government's drive to cut the fat off the generous paychecks of directors and top managers in public corporations.

The initiative to trim subsidies and excesses of GOCCs is part of the cost-cutting measures the President outlined in "A Roadmap to Fiscal Stability and Fighting Poverty." The measures are aimed at generating P100 billion in cost savings.

Ms Arroyo has also asked Congress to pass eight tax measures, including one that increases the tax on "sin products," such as cigarettes and alcohol, to raise P80 billion.

Economists at the University of the Philippines had warned that a likely rise in global interest rates would make it much costlier to repay the government's overseas debt, raising the risk of default in two to three years' time. *With a report from AFP*

Home financing agency chief vows turnaround

THE HEAD of the National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. yesterday vowed to turn around the losing government-owned and -controlled corporation.

Celso de los Angeles, newly appointed president of the NHMFC, said he was ready to provide affordable housing terms to the public and to address the institution's financial problems.

In a statement, De los Angeles said the P1.5 billion in losses the NHMFC incurred last year represented loan penalties that had been waived in accordance with Republic Act No. 8501, or the Housing Loan Condonation Act of 1998.

He said the home financing agency condoned as of Dec. 31, 2003 a total of P1.6 billion in loan penalties. If the amount was not waived, it would have contributed to the agency's income.

De los Angeles said the P2.3 billion in losses of the NHMFC as reported in the media recently must have mistakenly included the P700 million in direct subsidy received last year by the agency from the government to finance loans for acquisition of land tenure and housing by the informal settlers under its Community Mortgage Program.

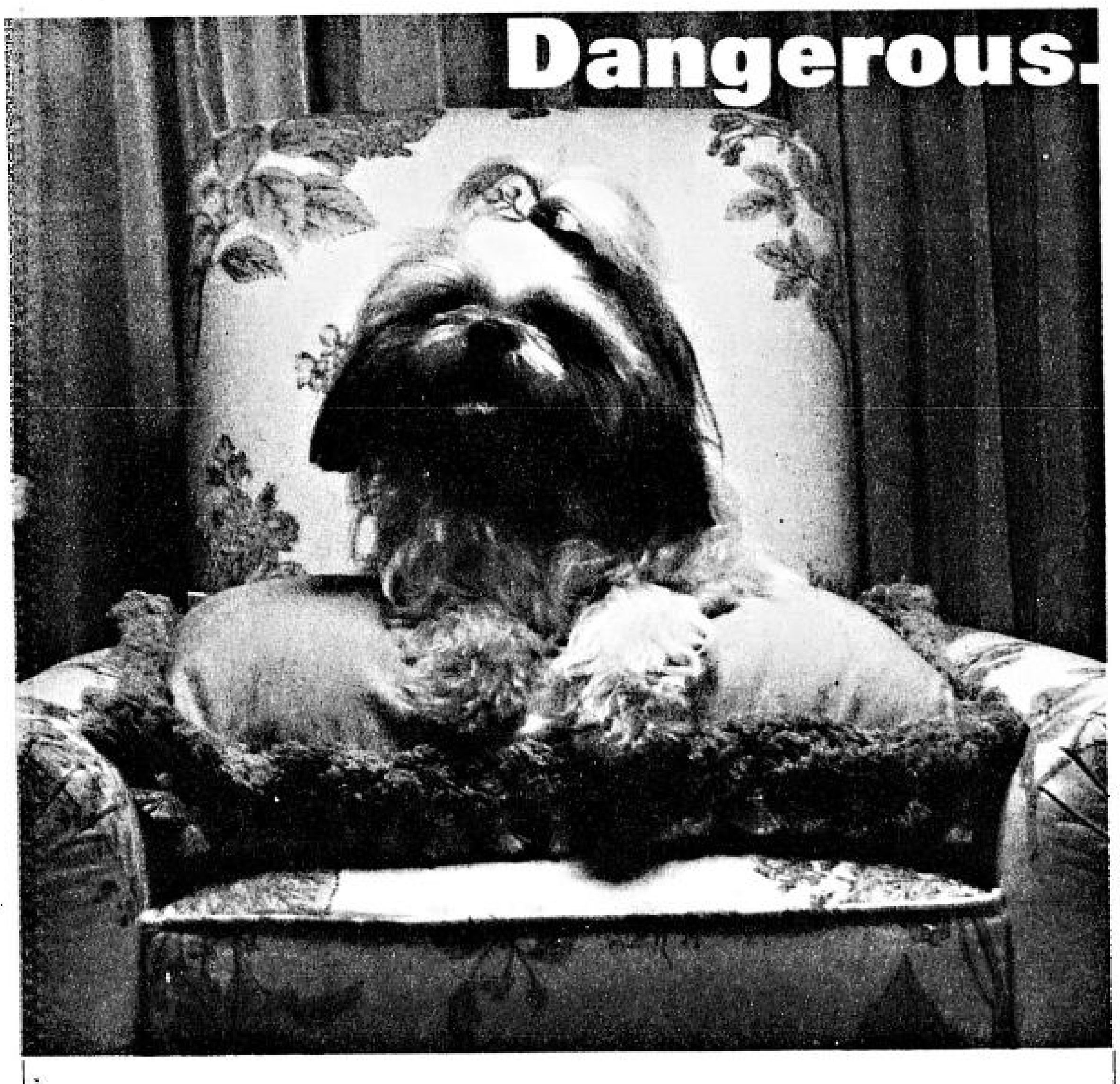
He said the P700 million earmarked for lending to the homeless urban poor could still be recovered from loans granted at the concessionary rate of 6 percent per annum. Of the amount, P615.6 million was released last year.

De los Angeles said the NHMFC was negotiating with the Social Security System, Home Development Mutual Fund and creditors and funders of its Unified Home Lending Program (UHLP), which was implemented from 1988 to 1996, for the write-off of some P2 billion in penalties.

De los Angeles said that while the NHMFC condoned the loan penalties of the housing loan borrowers of SSS and Pag-Ibig Fund under the UHLP, NHMFC creditors-funders did not correspondingly condone the penalties on the NHMFC loans.

Moreover, he said all government home financing institutions, including NHMFC, were barred from pursuing foreclosure proceedings under Executive Order No. 281 until Aug. 9, 2004.

This inability to foreclose delinquent accounts and instill credit discipline among borrowers further eroded NHMFC's collection efficiency and ultimately its profitability, De los Angeles said. *Norman Bordadora*



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Ex-agri chief hits back . . .

From page A1

Secretary Luis Lorenzo said on Saturday he was eager for an investigation.

"I welcome it to prove that [the accusations] are false and meant to destroy my integrity," Lorenzo said.

But he wasn't waiting for a probe to say that he had spent much more of his own money on the job than he was said to have filched from agencies attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Lorenzo told the INQUIRER exactly how much these voluntary expenditures amounted to, but later asked that the amount be kept confidential, citing security reasons. Suffice it to say, he stressed, that it was a "significant part" of his person al savings.

The former agriculture secretary was said to have charged P2.9 million in Lear jet trips and over P300,000 in cell phone bills. He insisted that he had spent considerably more to cover his expenses in his past three years in government, first as presidential adviser tasked with generating one million jobs and then as agriculture secretary.

Richest

Reputedly the richest man in the Arroyo Cabinet, Lorenzo has a declared personal net worth of more than P500 million. His family owns Macondray and the Lapanday Group of Companies—exporters and distributors of food products, among other things. He is current chair of Land Bank of the Philippines.

Peasant leader and party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis) said Thursday that Lorenzo charged his phone bills to the Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp., of which the agriculture secretary was also chair. On the same day, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas secretary general Danilo Ramos said Lorenzo had made Livecor, a DA livelihood agency, pay for chartered flights contracted with Subic International Charter.

Mariano and Ramos had based their allegations on Commission on Audit reports.

Denial

Lorenzo, one of the officials at the forefront of the administration's food security campaign, denied that he had intended to defraud the government when he incurred the phone and jet travel expenses.

"[The money] was spent with the genuine interest of helping the agriculture sector, especially the farmers," he said.

To prove this point, Lorenzo said that during his DA term, the agriculture sector posted its highest growth rate in 15 years—an increase valued at P23 billion in the first half of 2004.

He insisted that he had paid P189,000 of the cell phone bills in question even before he had heard from the COA, which disallowed the expenses. He also pointed out: "[My accusers] make it appear that [the phone bills] were incurred in so short a time. They were incurred over 16 months."

Field duty

Because he was out in the field most of the time, he explained, he had to communicate with his staff and other people in the department mainly through cell phone. "If you [computed] the average per month, [the phone bills wouldn't] even reach P30,000," Lorenzo said.

As for his Lear jet trips around the country, he said he had chartered flights only to destinations not accessible by commercial aircraft.

But more than the alleged misuse of public funds, Lorenzo seemed to mind the criticism that his work had all come to nothing—specifically, nothing for the farmers he was supposed to serve.

"I was on the job for less than 21 months," he lamented. "If you helped 11.2 million farmers and 20 million involved in the food sector ... there's still be [others] who'd say they weren't helped at all."

Apparently, he was broken-hearted: "I wanted to do a lot more."

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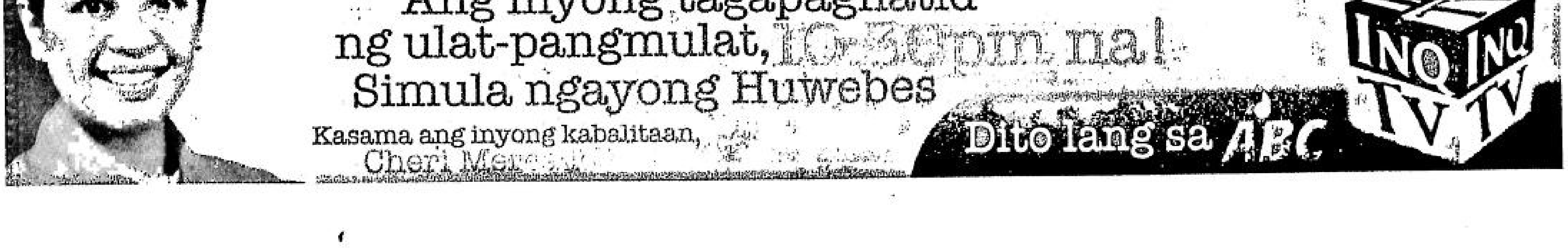

Corpus ends controversial AFP career

From page A1

poration or as an official in the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency.

"The former is too tame for me, while the latter is too hot," the former chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) laughed.

Unmatched for its unexpected twists, Corpus' career path swung from the military to the communist New People's Army to the ultra-right Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa.

"[He] joined the left but never became a leftist, and joined the right but never became a rightist," a retired officer said of the man.

Even while in the "middle," Corpus, who graduated from the Philippine Military Academy in 1967, was never known as a "neutral" player.

As Isafp chief, Corpus launched an exposé against the alleged criminal activities of Sen. Panfilo Lacson. The charges have remained unsubstantiated.

Two years after graduating from the PMA, Corpus led a raid on the academy's armory, carting away weapons which he delivered to the NPA. Five years later, in 1974, a disillusioned Corpus called up a PMA classmate and surrendered.

In 1978, a military tribunal sentenced Corpus to death by musketry for rebellion. Convicted with him were opposition leader Sen. Benigno Aquino and NPA chief Bernabe "Kumander Dante" Buscayno.

In November 1986, Corpus blew the whistle on a military plot to oust President Corazon Aquino, who had released him from jail months earlier. Ms Aquino would later grant Corpus executive clemency, paving the way for his reinstatement in the military.

A recipient of two Distinguished Service Stars, two Bronze Cross Medals and various awards, the old soldier has no regrets over the many roads his life has taken.

"When I made those decisions, I believed in my heart they were the right thing to do," he said, referring to his defection to the NPA, his move to abandon the leftist revolution, his decision to help overthrow President Joseph Estrada and his denunciation of Lacson.

"All my decisions, I thought, were the right path to take at the time," he said.

"When I joined them (NPA rebels), I was sincere, only to find out later that this decision led me to the lion's den," Corpus said.

"I became disillusioned because of the Plaza Miranda bombing. I was there when Joma (Communist Party of the Philippines leader Jose Ma. Sison) was planning the Plaza Miranda bombing. It is a well-known fact of party history. Joma cannot hide the truth from history."

Sison had denied the allegation.

Corpus also said the communist ideology ran counter to his religious beliefs. There were other "injustices in the system" which he declined to talk about.

Corpus is not optimistic about the prospects of peace with the communist rebels.

"They will never deviate from the armed struggle which they consider as the primary form of struggle. The parliamentary is only secondary in support of armed struggle," he said.

Corpus has recommended the cessation of peace talks with the rebels.

"We must defeat them on the battlefield," he said. "They are just fooling the government with the negotiations. I don't think it will amount to anything."

Corpus said the Oakwood mutineers should not be given "kid gloves" treatment.

"They should suffer the consequences of their action or this (military adventurism) will just be repeated again and again."

Rosales warns gov't vs granting amnesty

From page A1

take up arms again.

"No more. We have had so many coup attempts," Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales said. "... But if they are forgiven, it should be accompanied by a promise that it will not be repeated because coup attempts have been the biggest impediment to our progress."

Analysts have said the government's failure to sternly punish military men behind the coup attempts from 1986 to 1989 had emboldened some 300 junior officers and enlisted men to seize the Oakwood hotel in a failed mutiny last year.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz last week raised the possibility of amnesty for the mutineers but Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez quickly squelched any such plan, saying the soldiers were already facing charges in court and were beyond any presidential act of pardon at this time.

"If the coups had stopped after the first attempt, we would have been very progressive now," Rosales said in an interview the other day after celebrating Mass at the Edsa Shrine.

"Now, I ask, should we forgive again? Let us not forgive without an assurance that it will not be repeated. Clear?" the prelate said.

But the final decision was up to the government, he added.

Held in various detention centers, the mutineers fight boredom by reading newspapers and books, making hammocks and handcrafted bags, painting T-shirts and watching TV programs—from news to sitcoms and reality shows, such as "Extra Challenge" and the fantasy telenovela "Mulawin."

The reading tastes of the so-called "Air Force 12" detainees range from "Wisdom of the Generals," "48 Laws of Power," "Da Vinci Code" and "Selling Hitler" to "Gideon's Spies: Secret History of the Mossad," "The Art of War" and "The Purpose Driven Life."

And, of course, the Harry Potter series and Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Some have cut out enrollment forms in magazine advertisements offering distance-learning education. Six have enrolled in business management and speech proficiency.

Like anyone looking for the light at the end of the tunnel, all are optimistic they will one day again serve the Armed Forces.

"But we are still lost somewhere in the middle of the tunnel," an officer said.

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KILLING OF JOURNALIST

Moms of rob-slay suspects arrested

By Nancy C. Carvajal

IT IS now a family affair.

Police arrested yesterday the mothers of two key suspects in the killing of Today assistant business éditor Jose Luis Villanueva for forcing a 13-year-old boy to give false statements in favor of their sons.

The three suspects in the killing of Villanueva: Rommel Capones, Henry Lizardo and Gerry Cecilio, are now detained at the Pasay City jail. No bail has been recommended for the three.

The boy, who was close to tears, told the INQUIRER yesterday that the mother of Capones, Nita, 39; and that of Cecilio, Lourdes, 52, talked to him Saturday evening and told him to lie for the suspects.

The boy, a neighbor of the two women in Barangay Sto. Niño, Pasay City, said both women told him to tell the police that it was Lizardo who stabbed Villanueva during a bus robbery on the midnight of Sept. 23.

The false testimony was apparently aimed at getting Capones off the hook.

Earlier, three witnesses pointed to Capones as the one who stabbed Villanueva.

Also, Lizardo, in a video confession, related that Capones stabbed the victim in the neck after the latter refused to hand over a Nokia 7610.

The boy said the mothers of Capones and Cecilio even offered him money. When he refused, they started threatening him.

"*Tinakot po nila ako na hindi na ako makakalabas ng bahay pag hindi ako tumestigo* (They told me that I would no longer be able to go out of the house if I didn't testify)," the boy said.

Officer on case Senior Insp. Joey Goforth said that at about 8 p.m. Saturday, the boy, with the mothers of the suspects, arrived at the Pasay police station.

He was told by the mothers that the boy would be testifying that their sons were innocent.

However, when Goforth talked to the boy, the child admitted that he was only threatened by the mothers of Capones and Cecilio to give a false testimony.

The official said he then fetched the boy's mother, who later angrily decided to file charges against the two women.

Charges of violation of the Child Abuse and Exploitation Act were then immediately readied against the mothers of Capones and Cecilio, who were detained at the Pasay police station.

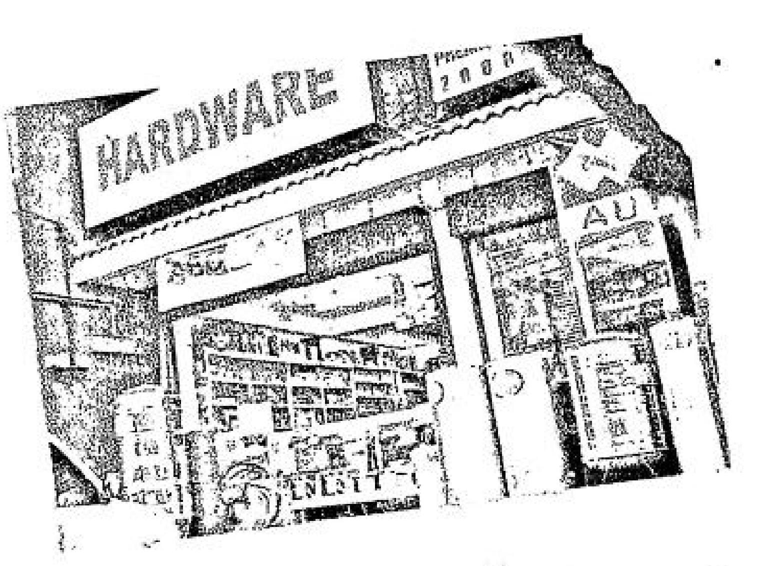
As the charges were being prepared and as the INQUIRER was talking to the boy and his mother, relatives of Capones and Cecilio tried to gang up on them.

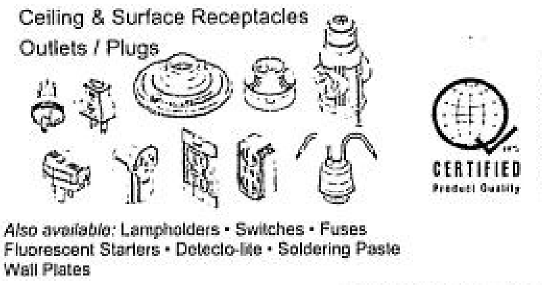
In the presence of the INQUIRER, the unidentified relatives, speaking in stern voices, told the boy and his mother to drop their plans of filing charges.

As they spoke, the boy trembled in apparent fear.

They pursued the filing of charges before the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office but the duty prosecutor for yesterday was a no-show from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The no-show of the prosecutor raised suspicion that a ranking Pasay City official was trying to aid the alleged killers of Villanueva.





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MMDA goes after jeeps plying Edsa

By Margaux C. Ortiz

JEEPNEYS are not allowed to ply Edsa, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) reminded drivers yesterday.

"Jeepneys are not authorized to use Edsa because they do not have the franchise to do so," MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said in a phone interview.

Fernando said jeepneys should use side streets, adding that only jeepneys crossing Edsa would be given leeway.

Drivers caught violating the policy will be fined P6,000 for plying out-of-line.

At the same time, Fernando told bus drivers to always bring the original certificates of public conveyance of the buses.

"Bus units without CPCs will be considered illegally operating and will be impounded," he said.

₱150-M 'shrine for poor' rising in Quezon City

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THEY call it "church for the poor." And it will cost P150 million.

Others may frown at the irony but people supporting the construction of the Santuario de San Vicente de Paul Shrine and Columbarium could not be happier.

Work on the project began on May 9, 2003, with a budget of P500,000.

A year and five months later, more than P50 million have poured in and the money just keeps coming, project director Fr. Atilano Fajardo told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The multi-million project is aimed at "teaching our people to look at things in another way," Fajardo said.

Some groups criticize the project's huge cost, but he chose to look at the essence of the shrine, that is of giving people the hope they need.

He said the project symbolized the "power of believing in teamwork."

Also, Fajardo said the shrine would serve as the "venue for the rich to reach out to the poor."

The three-story sanctuary is within the six-hectare seminary grounds of the Vincentian fathers in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

The amphitheater-shaped shrine is on the upper ground floor. The centerpiece and the walls would be glass sculptures by famous artists.

Below the shrine is the columbarium, where a fountain with surrounding pockets of gardens will be built.

Each garden will have bowls of water where candles could be floated.

Cremated remains are accepted for safekeeping at the columbarium. There are 9,000 available niches, with prices ranging from P50,000 to P75,000.

The third floor will house the offices.

Around the main structure will rise facilities for value formation and housing assistance that will cater to poor members of the parish.

This way, the sanctuary would become the bridge between the rich and the poor, said Fajardo, who was hopeful the shrine would be finished next year.

Piglet came to be blessed

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IN THE arms of her handler, "Babe" paraded down the aisle of the ivory-white church, behaved as she prepared to receive heaven's blessing.

The month-old piglet, demure with a pink and red ribbon tied around her belly, quietly awaited her turn to be blessed for the first time in the annual pet blessing at the Our Lady of Remedies Parish in Malate, Manila.

Babe was a standout. The only pig at the blessing, she caught the attention of kids and grownups who gathered for the event to either have their own pets blessed, or witness the yearly affair.

At past 1 p.m. yesterday, Babe, named after the straight-talking pig character in the movies, had her moment at the altar for a shower of holy water from Fr. John Leydon, Malate Church parish priest.

Like the sluggish pig from Manila Zoo's Kinder Zoo, around 80 pets from all over Metro Manila turned up at the church to be blessed, a celebration of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, who loved animals.

BABE after the blessing

"It has become a wonderful tradition yearly and it has caught on," said Bonjin Bolinao, a member of Old Manila Classics, an organization of Malate and Ermita residents who wanted to renew the district's community spirit.

Started in 1997, the pet blessing was supposed to be the opener of a yearlong series of community-oriented events at the church. But after initial successes, the group was forced to lay low for lack of funds.

Charges catch up with lawyer

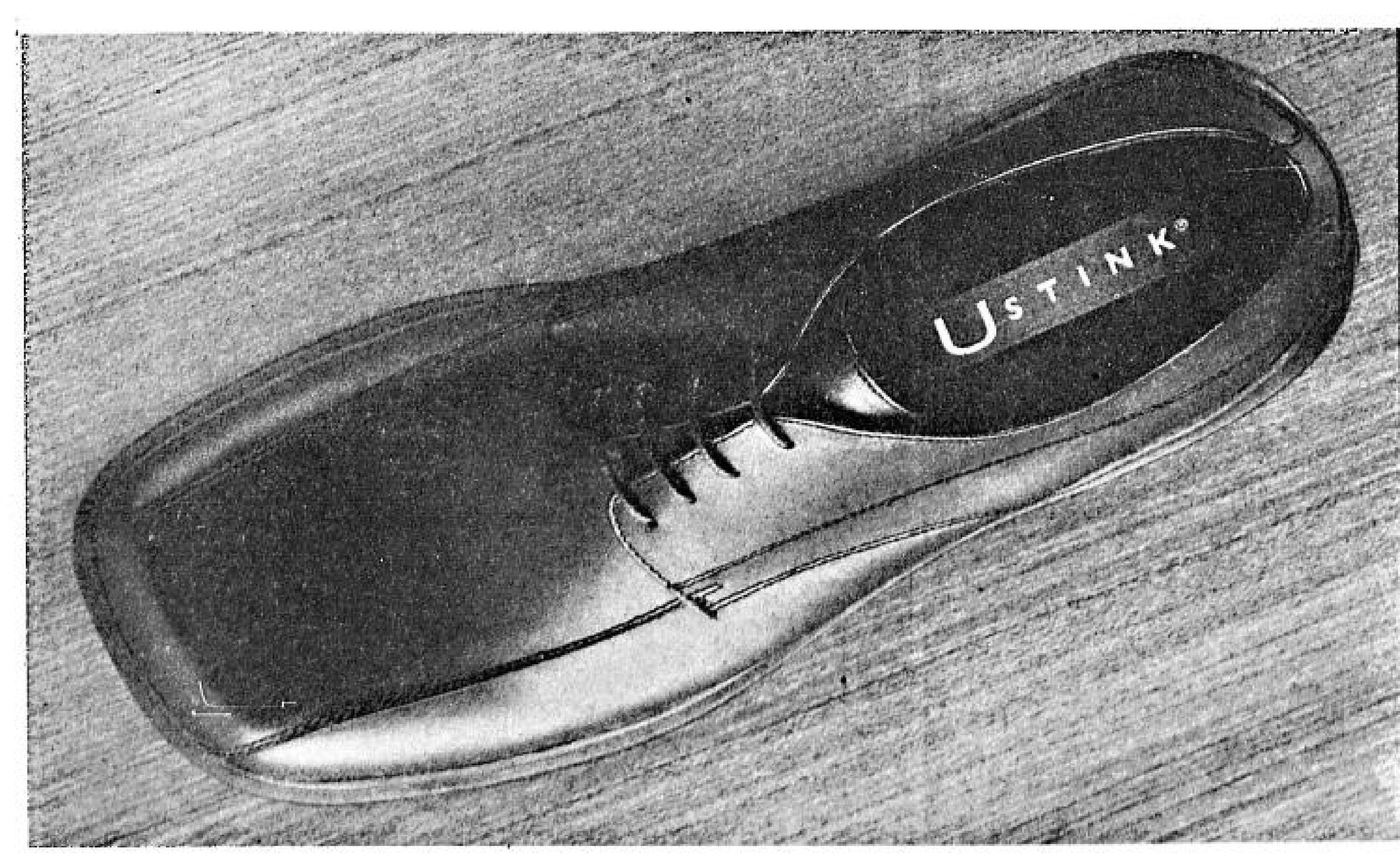
By Tarra V. Quismundo

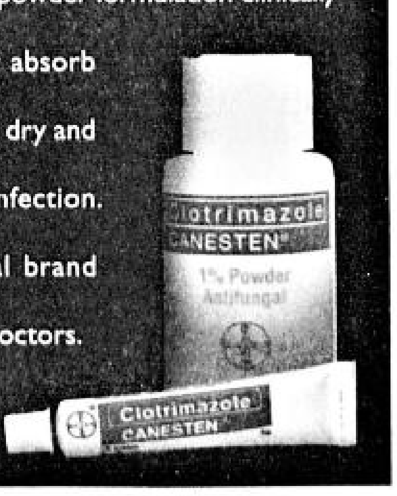
A LAWYER now faces criminal charges for the death of his wife almost two years ago, after the justice department found evidence to indict him.

John Fabico, corporate counsel for the Energy Development Corporation of the Philippine National Oil Company, has been charged with parricide for the death of his wife in 2002.

Through a resolution by state prosecutor Edwin Dayog, the Department of Justice found probable cause to bring Fabico to court for allegedly shooting his wife around 1:30 p.m. on Dec. 23, 2002, in their house on P. Salita Street, in Obrero, Tondo, Manila.

That day, Edith Fabico was found dead inside the bathroom of the couple's bedroom.





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Expressway mishap kills 2

By Ruth L. Navarrra

TWO DIED and six were injured in a multiple vehicular collision along the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) in Susanna Heights, Muntinlupa City, yesterday morning.

Driver Romi Cris Torquator, 22, and his passenger Gerald Abarintos, 27, from Calendola Village, San Pedro, Laguna, were declared dead on arrival at Ospital ng Maynila.

Their Mitsubishi Gallant, with plate number PMS 981, was sandwiched between a trailer bed truck and a trailer tractor head.

PO2 Cecilio Tomas said that at 2:26 a.m., Cristopher Repe, 40, was driving his trailer bed truck, with plate number UKF 598, on the south-bound lane of the SLEX when he made a sudden stop.

Hit from behind

This forced the Mitsubishi of Torquator to hit his truck from behind.

Melchor Alo, 34, who was cruising behind Torquator in the trailer head failed to stop, hitting the Mitsubishi Galant, which was crushed between the two road giants.

Loosing control, Alo's vehicle veered to the opposite lane of the highway and collided head on with a north-bound dump truck, injuring the driver and his two passengers.

Alo's passengers Jayson and Davelyn Riofloridо are in critical condition at the Asian Hospital.

All drivers except Repe were injured.

Alo will be charged with two counts of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and six counts of multiple physical injuries and damage to property.

Senator says tougher laws needed vs cell phone theft

SEN. MANNY Villar, chair of the Senate committee on public order and illegal drugs, said the rising number of cellular phone thefts called for stricter controls in the resale of mobile units.

"We have to stop looking at cell phone crimes as simple cases of theft and robbery," said Villar, who noted that cell phone theft has emerged as one of the most serious crimes these days.

Recalling the tragic death of Today assistant business editor Jose Villanueva, the senator said, "People were killing for cell phones and people have died protecting them."

Based on police records, cell phone theft already accounts for over one-third of the reported 2,621 robbery cases nationwide during the first half of the year.

In a press statement, Villar said these figures grow at an alarming rate every day, considering that there are nearly 30 million cell phone subscribers in the country recognized as the "texting capital of the world."

Villar also said that the majority of cell phone thieves were drug users who sell or pawn the stolen cell phones to sustain their drug addiction.

He added, "As the number of cell phone theft cases grows and the situation worsens, we should criminalize the altering or tampering of International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) and be more vigilant in apprehending the people or establishments who sell stolen units in the guise of second-hand cell phones."

The IMEI marking, put into place by the National Telecommunications Commission, did not deter cell phone thieves since electronic technicians merely unblocked a blocked cell phone unit. These "unblocked" stolen units are then sold as "used" or "reconditioned" cell phones.

He said the citizens should not only be protected from cell phone theft but also from substandard cell phones being sold nationwide, most of which are stolen units.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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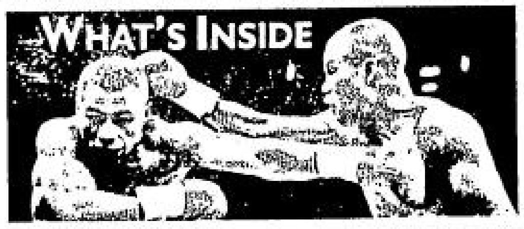

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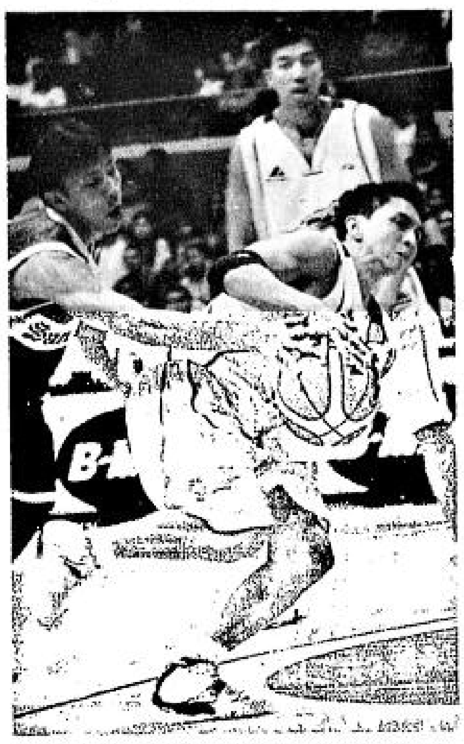


A DRIVING Jimmy Alapag is fouled by Olsen Racela in their game last night. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Telan powers TNT to victory

By June Navarro

MARK Telan usually plays second fiddle to Asi Taulava. Last night, it was his time to shine.

Telan banged in 18 points in the final half, giving Talk 'N Text a huge lift in a 93-89 victory over San Miguel Beer at the start of the PBA Gran Matador Philippine Cup before a sellout crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

"It was Mark's game. I have to credit him for giving us a big lift tonight. I hope he keeps on playing that way," said Talk 'N Text coach Joel Banal, after the Phone Pals had rallied back from 49-57 in the third period.

Asi Taulava delivered the marginal freethrows down the stretch but it was Telan who paved the way for the fiery windup by the Phone Pals.

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Shell
7:20 p.m.—Ginebra vs Purefoods

Telan opened the final period with a three-pointer and clustered seven points in a crucial run that had the Phone Pals turning the tables on the Beermen.

Telan finished with 20 points.

Brian Gahol had a field day in the paint by scoring 17 points, along with Dondon Hontiveros, while Dorian Peña chipped in 14 points and grabbed 21 rebounds.

Olsen Racela earned the distinction of shooting the first basket of the season, a three-pointer from left flank that touched off the Beermen's scoring rampage in the first quarter.

Taulava and Willie Miller finally hit their strides and Jimmy Alapag's back-to-back triples broke the momentum of the Beermen.

Telan and Bong Ravena continued the onslaught in the perimeter, pushing the Phone Pals ahead, 32-19, before Gahol singlehandedly brought the Beermen back into the fight.

Gahol had 12 points, including two three-point plays and a trey during a five-minute span midway in the second quarter that overhauled

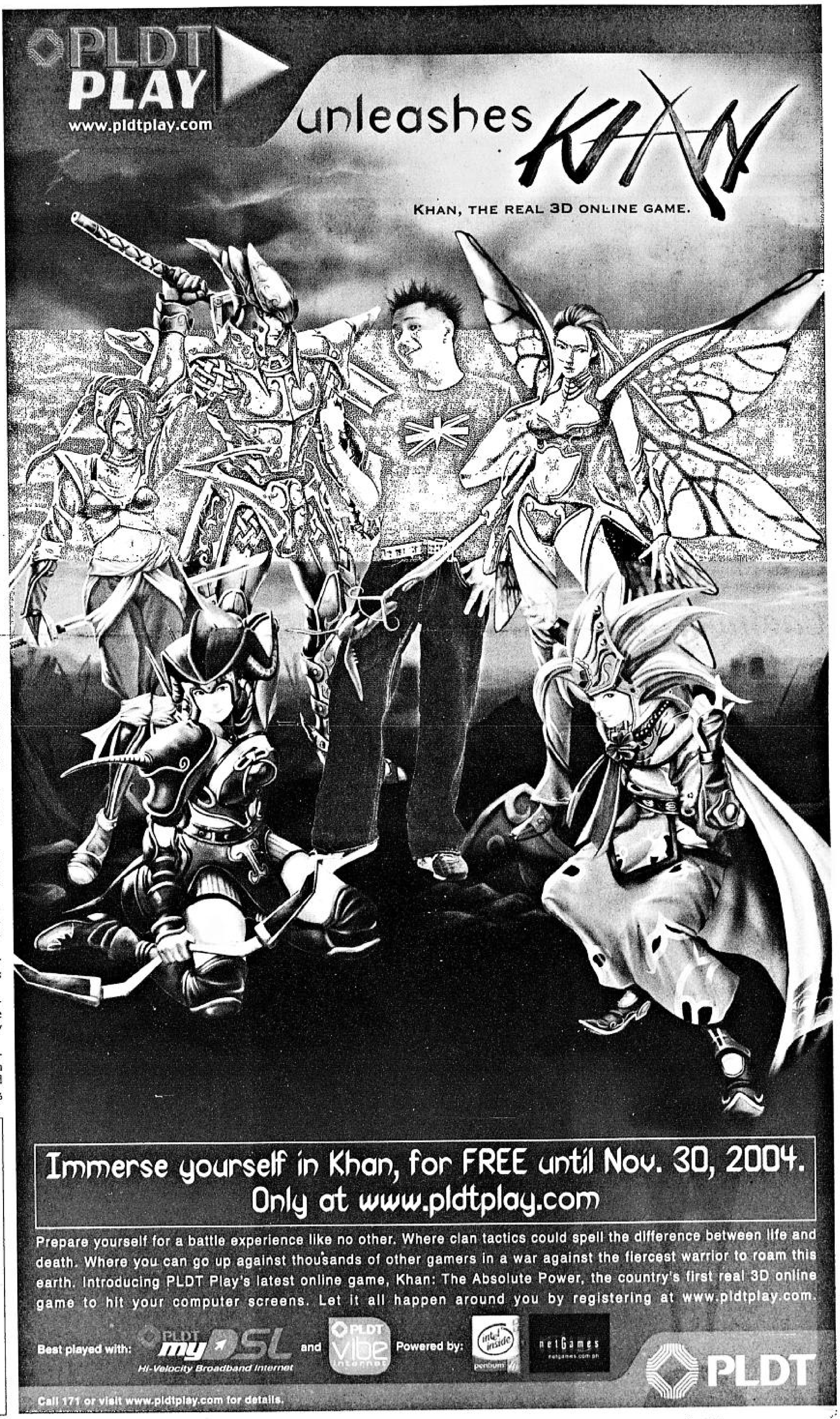
TELAN/ A26

Mark sews up Ukraine title

Standings: 10.0—IM M. Paragua (RP); 7.5—IM D. Andreikin (Russia), IM A. Obukhov (Russia); 6.5—IM O. Annageldyev (Turkmenistan); 6.0—IM O. Loskutov (Russia), IM I. Smirnov (Ukraine); GM V. Shtyrenkov (Russia), GM A. Nikitin (Russia), GM G. Kuzmin (Russia), IM A. Zubov (Ukraine); 5.5—GM A. Moroz (Russia); 5.0—IM D. Tishin (Ukraine), Y. Zinchenko (Ukraine).

FILIPINO Grandmaster-elect Mark Paragua stunned former Soviet Union champion GM Gennadi Kuzmin in the 12th and penultimate round Saturday to clinch the third leg of the Alushta Tournament trilogy in Crimea, Ukraine.

MARK/ A26



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Filipina booters trip Singapore

STRIKER Edna Agravante cut loose to score the clincher in the second half as the Philippines nipped Singapore, 2-1, Saturday to get back on track in the Asean Football Federation (AFF) Women's Championship in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The 23-year-old Agravante came to the rescue after Singapore had tied the match, 1-1, at the half.

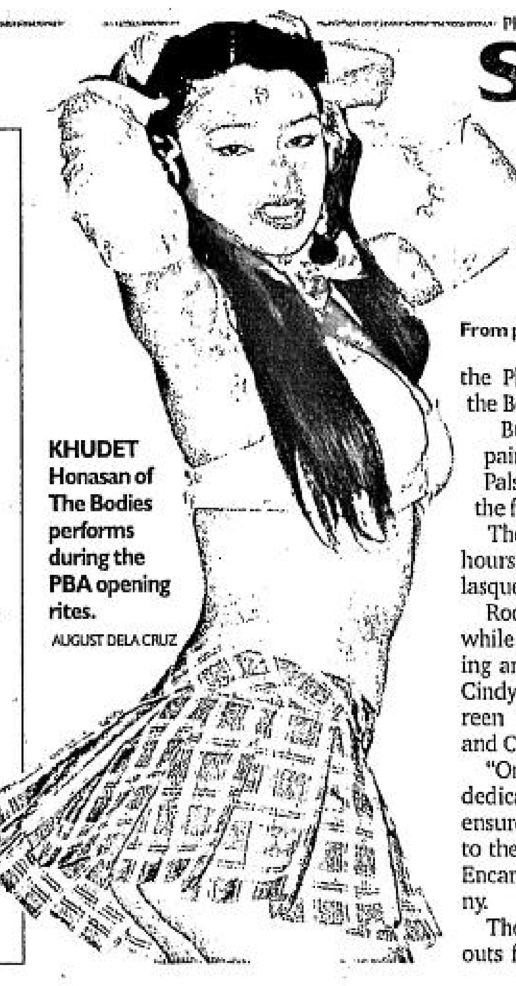
The victory leveled the RP women's record at 1-1 following their 1-0 defeat to Indonesia Friday.

Clarisse Lazaro, the youngest member of the team at 18, put the RP women ahead in the eighth minute.

The Filipinas were still playing the Vietnamese at presstime.

To qualify for the semifinals, the Filipinas must beat Vietnam and hope that the Indonesians lose or draw with Singapore.

In Group A matches Friday, Vietnam battled Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Thailand to a scoreless 0-0 draw and Myanmar routed Maldives, 17-0.



KHUDET Honasan of The Bodies performs during the PBA opening rites. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Telan powers . . .

From page A25

the Phone Pals' advantage and moved the Beermen ahead, 35-33.

But Yancy de Ocampo scored on a pair of putbacks, allowing the Phone Pals to take a 37-35 edge going into the final half.

The colorful opening rites lasted two hours with Asia's songbird, Regine Velasquez, easily stealing the show.

Rock star Bamboo also performed while the crowd was treated to a glittering array of muses led by actress-model Cindy Kurleto of San Miguel Beer, Maureen Larazzabal of Barangay Ginebra and Coca-Cola's Angel Locsin.

"On the 30th year of the PBA, we are dedicated to pursuing a dream that will ensure the stint of the RP basketball team to the Olympics," said PBA chair Buddy Encarnado during the opening ceremony.

The tournament will serve as the tryouts for the creation of a national pool that will take part not only in the Asian Games but in the ABC, whose 2007 edition will be the qualifying event for the 2008 Olympics.

The scores:

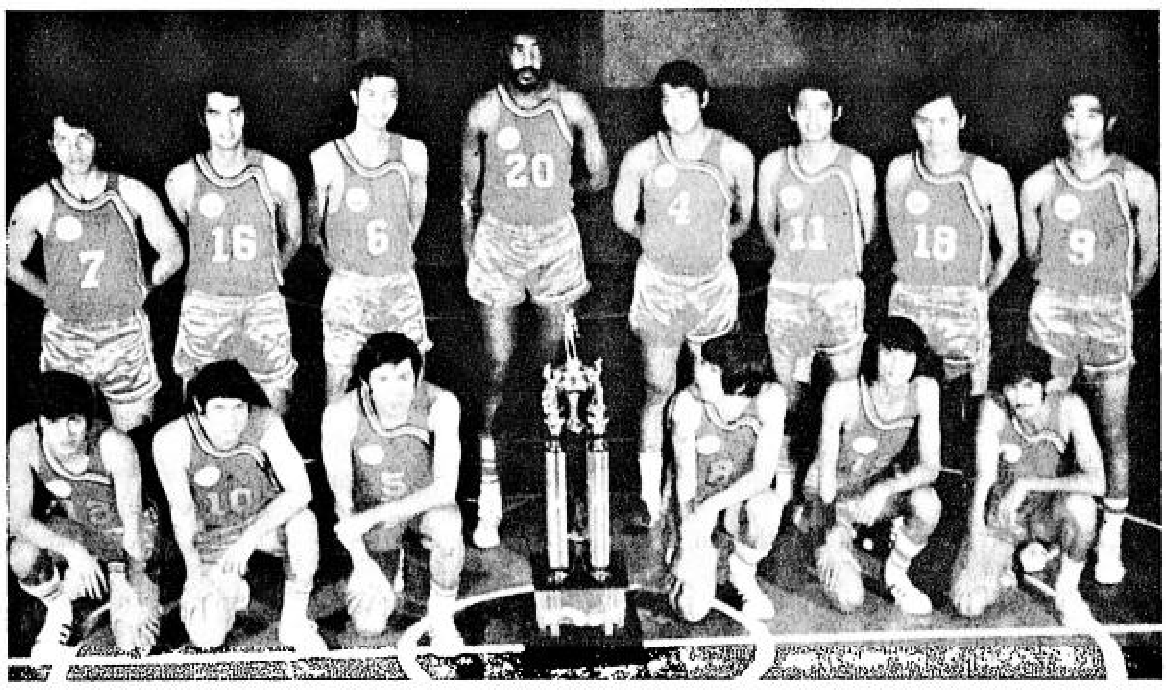
TALK 'N TEXT 93—Telan 20, DE Ocampo 16, Miller 15, Taulava 15, Alapag 15, Ravena 6, Camaso 6, Fran 0, Belano 0.

SAN MIGUEL 89—Hontiveros 17, Gahol 17, Racela 15, Ildefonso 14, Pena 14, Belasco 9, Mente 3, Castro 0, Singson 0.

Quaters: 24-18, 37-35,64-64, 93-89.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

COMMISSIONER Noli Eala makes the toss for the jump-off between SMB's Dorian Peña (left) and TNT's Asi Taulava. Behind Eala, at left, is guest performer Regine Velasquez.



BOY'S GLORY YEAR: Arazas (second from left, kneeling) with the other members of the Meralco Reddy Kilowatts team that won the 1971 Manila Industrial and Commercial Athletic Association (Micaa) championship. Kneeling (from left), Lyle Ross, Arazas, Roberto Salonga, Francis Arnaiz, Lawrence Mumar, Jumbo Salvador. Back row (same order), Robert Jaworski, Ramon Lucindo, Jimmy Mariano, Bob Presley, Alberto "Big Boy" Reynoso, Alfonso Marquez, Fort Acuña, Orly Bauzon.

Caging icon Boy Arazas dies at 66

BASKETBALL internationalist Engracio "Boy" Arazas, noted for both his great skills and toughness, died on Saturday. He was 66.

A mainstay of the Ysmael Steel Admirals at the height of their fabled rivalry with the Yco Painters, Arazas was a member of the Philippine team which last won the Asian Games gold medal in 1962.

He was also in the national teams to the 1964 Tokyo Olympics that competed in the Yokohama eliminations and the 1962 World Basketball Championships in Manila.

Arazas, who later also played for Meralco, is survived by wife Tessie and children Jayjay and Pingoy.

He had been wheelchair-bound following a stroke; later suffered from pneumonia, and confined at the Sacred Heart Hospital in Malolos, Bulacan, where he succumbed.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Funeral Homes on Raymundo Street, Pasig City.

Interment will be announced later.

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La Salle-FEU clash an anti-depressant

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

LAST Thursday's monumental UAAP men's basketball championship game ought to have a special tag.

You know, something like the Thrilla in Manila.

Tired punsters had tagged it a clash of the titans.

But it was not only bigness, not mere size which ultimately defined the event.

It rose so huge, it gripped and sent all of us basketball fanatics limp with excitement.

It was a pulsating theater.

It was a first-class thrill.

So it may also be apt to call the La Salle-FEU game on Thursday a dictator's dream.

***

You wonder why?

Any ruler or nation president, like Madame Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who faces tough, terrible times, like what we all have here, would have offered that great, unforgettable theater as a national balm.

It was a show that momentarily lifted and refreshed.

In fact, with all the hard times, the assorted aches poor citizens suffer here, the UAAP men's basketball championship clearly served as instant anti-depressant.

For proof, the game continued to be the topic of the town the morning after.

It was major stuff in both tabloids and broadsheets.

Over the weekend, it was still being talked about practically in all sporting corners hereabouts.

***

Of course, the effects, somewhat hallucinatory, would not last.

Soon enough, everybody has to again brace up for lawlessness, crippling street mess.

Everybody again has to face up to endless crimes, soaring prices of practically everything, topped by nepotism, corruption and limp, put-on efforts to stall galloping graft.

But it would not be easy to forget how the men's varsity championship game surpassed original billing.

Maybe it was pure coincidence that the UAAP cage crown was contested on the eve of the anniversary of the Thrilla in Manila.

But as the title game was also held at the Araneta Coliseum, where Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier fought in an all-time classic 29 years ago last Friday, it was enough to send a few scribes running berserk with their adjectives.

***

No, there was no keenness to a clash of heavenly bodies as when Ali, on the verge of falling, crushed Frazier for a TKO in the 14th.

The national thrill that followed La Salle's reclaim of the UAAP crown may not be as sweeping as Manny Pacquiao's demolition of pound-for-pound boxing great Marco Antonio Barrera last November.

But, at least, the La Salle championship win will have to be enshrined among the most memorable main events in RP caging.

Winning coach Franz Pumaren is sure to loom luminous with his latest achievement.

But, although it's said nobody remembers a second-placer, gallant FEU, the way it helped showcase La Salle might, should also be part of UAAP lore.

***

Yes, there were wild rumors FEU, heavily favored, took a dive in Game 1.

But so grand was the La Salle championship there continued to be a debate on what ultimately decided the rubber match.

Was it the lead-giving triple by JV Casio in the dying seconds?

Or Maybe Dennis Miranda's sorry miss on a layup, after he tried to bank when he was fully primed at mid-air for a finger roll?

Then what if Mac Cardona did not go up, up high to haul the crucial last rebound, before sinking the subsequent free shots?

Now here: pitifully lost in the euphoria was the mighty putback by a lanky, unassuming rookie with the last name of Maierhoffer.

The bonus goal had had a steadying effect on La Salle, rendered unshakeable by solid, game-long defense, when the Archers were truly under siege.

That's about all. Thanks and congrats.

In the final analysis though, the overall texture of the championship game failed to lend promise of better international results for the country.

Despite the thrill, the deafening hysteria, the best we could say is that title game was "great inferior basketball."

This sorry fact is not meant to be a depressant.

***

(**SINGAPORE MAIL:** From Herminia Pamatmat of PPG Industries in Singapore, who said she lost all her travel documents after her handbag was snatched last month by two men on a motorbike during a stop-over in Penang, Malaysia: "I didn't know how I could go back to my office in Singapore the next day. I thought of phoning a friend in RP, a constituent of Congressman Mikey Arroyo. I was directed to go to Kuala Lumpur to rehabilitate my travel documents. I did. I arrived in Singapore a little later, but very happy to realize that there are kind countrymen ready to sympathize. I wish to thank the KL embassy officials—Second Secretary and Consul Angelo Amonoy and Consular Secretary Shirley Vergara. And of course, Congressman Arroyo, whom I have not met.")

Tanguilig shines; RP still 4th

THE RP-PAGCOR Casino Filipino Trade Team kept the pressure on third-running Hong Kong in the overall team standings after Rhyan Tanguilig placed fourth in the accident-marred fifth stage of the Dji Sam Soe Tour of Indonesia cycling classic from Yogyakarta to Madium Saturday.

The 2004 Tour Pilipinas champion was in the 14-man first group that clocked four hours and 19 minutes at the end of the flat 174.5-kilometer lap won by 1997 Marlboro Tour champion Wong Kam-po of Hong Kong.

Lloyd Reynante finished 18th in 4:00.49, but Albert Primero became the first Filipino casualty as he sustained injuries after a spill at the 140-km mark and was forced to drop out of the race.

Thanks to Tanguilig and Reynante, the Filipinos remained fourth overall after five laps of the 1,052-km bikefest with a cumulative time of 62:35.52. They were a minute behind Hong Kong (62:34.53) with four laps to go. Greenfields Fresh Milk (62:15.33) and Poligon Sweet Nice (62:28.19) kept the 1-2 spots, respectively.

Mark sews up Ukraine title

From page A25

The 20-year-old Filipino's win with the black pieces against the veteran Kuzmin, one of the strongest players of his generation, pushed his total to an unreachable 10 points. Paragua stood 2.5 points clear of his closest rivals, Russian IMs Dmitry Andreikin and Alexsander Obukhov.

Paragua's second victory in Ukraine in less than a month underlines his superb form before his stint in the 36th World Chess Olympiad slated on Oct. 14-31 in Majorca, Spain.

"I played to win in order to get a shot at the 2600 rating," he said. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Finex President's Cup tees off tomorrow

THE FIRST Finex President's Cup golf tournament will be held tomorrow at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club. Tee-off is from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Globe Platinum and Pilipinas Shell are event presentors while hole sponsors are McDonald's, Club Manila East, 2100 Customs Brokers, Inc., U-Freight Phils., Inc. and Cargo Haus. The tourney serves as the seventh leg of the Finex Golf Tour.

Indon treats fans to Asian F3 victory

BOGOR, Indonesia—Saying he didn't want to look stupid before his countrymen, Indonesian Ananda Mikola sped off to an overwhelming victory in Race 7 of the Pertamina Fastron Asian Formula 3 Grand Prix Sunday at the Sentul International Circuit here.

Asian Formula 3 Grand Prix
Grand Final Indonesia Touring Car Champions
Sirkuit SE
Tgl. 03 Oktober

DADO Peña (center) celebrates his victory in the Promotions Class with compatriot Don Pastor (left), racing for Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Tom's, and third placer Kenko Miura of Japan.

The Indon, who got off to a flying start at the head of the grid, set a fastest lap time of 1:26.134 in lap 3 aboard the car lent to him by last year's champion, Pepon Marave of the Philippines.

Sharing the limelight was Filipino Dado Peña of Christian Jones Motorsport who finished first in the promotions class for cars with chassis built in 1998 or older.

A day after taking pole in the 12-lap race, Mikola, the 24-year-old veteran of the tough European racing circuit, hardly found any opposition before a big crowd that had come to see their racing hero dominate an international field that included six Filipino drivers.

Mikola negotiated the 4.2-km track in 17 minutes 21.415 seconds, turning what was supposed to be a three-cornered battle with Australian Christian Jones and Irish John O'Hara into a big rout.

"If I lose, the people won't understand that it was because of engine trouble or the like. They'd think I'm stupid," said Mikola, riding for Pertamina Fastron Kinetic F3.

He earned 20 points and will start on pole position in Race 8 later in the day.

O'Hara, who started third on the grid, jockeyed for position with Jones and Marave just after the green light and managed to secure second as the field sped down the 1.1-km straightaway in front of the two grandstands for the first time, a position he maintained for the next 11 laps.

O'Hara, racing for Shell Kinetic F3, salvaged 15 points and shot past Jones in the overall standings going into Race 8.

After battling through a blown engine and oil leak in practice, Peña clocked 18:11.277, good for sixth place overall, behind fifth placer Enzo Pastor of Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Tom's, who timed 18:07.939, and fourth placer Marave, who clocked 17:46.238 using a car lent to him by Jojo Silverio.

Promotions class leader Tyson Sy of Castrol Team Goddard-Minardi Asia spun out of contention in the fifth lap.

Briones, Torres defend Autocross crowns

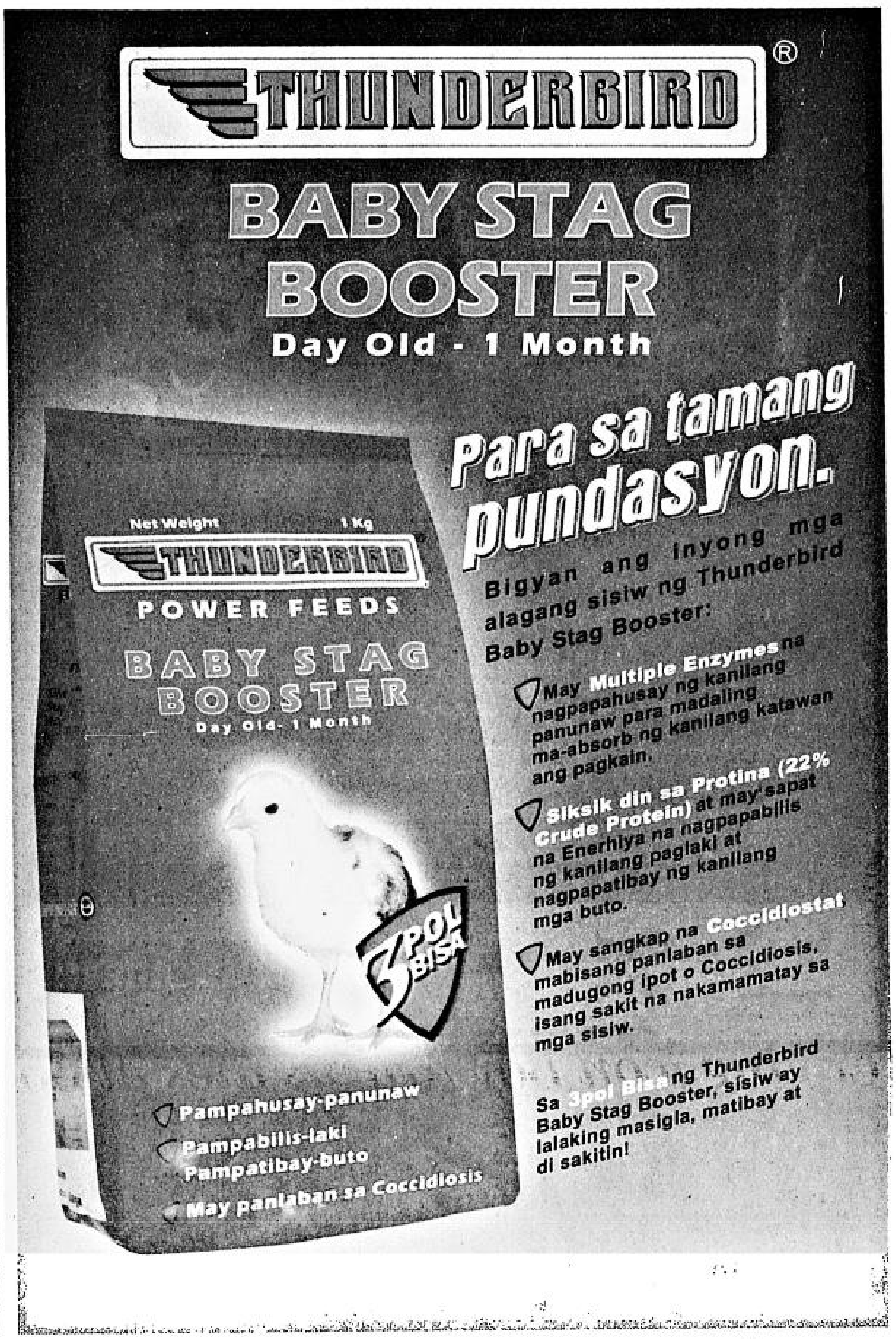
MIKKO BRIONES and Mel Torres put their Novice, Experienced and Pro titles on the line in the second Castrol Autocross Invitational slated Oct. 9 at the Open Parking Lot D of the SM City North Edsa.

Drivers from Nueva Ecija, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Bulacan, Pampanga and Metro Manila will provide the challenge in the event backed by Castrol Philippines, SM Supermalls, SM City North Edsa, The French Baker, Auto Extreme, Air Philippines, Top 40 Shirts and Ford Quezon Avenue.

In all, 19 classes will be contested in the Autocross.

Joey Sumcad, Ricky Suguitan, Arpee Manhit, Noel Rivera, Dannie Daquigan, Danilyn Ramirez, Jhack de Leon, Gerry Reyes and Dr. Peewee Mendiola are among the top drivers in the class championships.

Driver registration begins at 8 a.m. with the race proper starting at 10 a.m.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Gutierrez wins by 1; Handog scores rout

By Musong R. Castillo

CALATAGAN, Batangas—IG Gutierrez and Geleen Handog turned in scrambling rounds yesterday but still went on to win their respective divisions in the 2004 Samsung Junior Golf Season's Calatagan leg.

Gutierrez fired a six-over 78 and wound up with a 154 total, 10-over at the tough championship layout that played longer because of overnight rains.

That output was enough to hold off Matthew Manotoc, who engaged Gutierrez in an interesting duel. Manotoc matched that 78 and lost the boys' Class A title by one shot.

The 16-year-old Handog fired a 79 and won the girls' Class A by 26 shots as closest pursuer Bambee dela Paz fumbled with a 97.

Handog won a slot to the prestigious Asian Junior Masters in Thailand in December.

Debbie de Villa won girls' class B with an 82 (167), 20 strokes ahead of Frances Bawal, even as AR Ramos rallied with a 78 to beat Mark Anthony Arevalo. Ramos had 161, seven ahead of Arevalo, who struggled with an 86.

The Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines will be sending teams to three international tournaments, including the Temecula Singapore Junior Open next month and the Malaysia championships in January.

The champions in the Calatagan leg will all see action this weekend at Sherwood Hills Golf and Country Club to determine who will be sent to the three tournaments.

Paulina Sotto won girls' Class C with her 78 (159), while Abigail Arevalo ran away with the Class E plum after a 44 (84). Miguel Arevalo won boys' Class C after a 90 for 184.

Shin, Servida, Pizarro shine in Riviera golf

YOUNG Seob Shin and Chito Servida won in similar fashion to share the spotlight in the third Riviera Amateur Golf Championship at Riviera's Langer course in Silang, Cavite, over the weekend.

Shin, tied with two others after 18 holes, came through with a 77 on the second day and came away with a two-stroke victory over Jon Judan and Teody Pascual in Class A of the event sponsored by Pacsports and DHL. Judan and Pascual both wound up with 79 and finished with identical 160s, with the former clinching second place after the countback.

Servida bested the field in Class B by carding an 84 for a 171 total, two shots up on Ding Kalinga, who had a 173 after a 94. Dennis Gamboa finished third with a 179 after a 93.

In senior play, Danny Pizarro made an 87 and nipped Felipe Judan (86) in the countback for the title. Both finished with 172, while Jose Nepomuceno settled for third with a 174 after an 86.

Shin, Servida and Pizarro thus joined Artemio Murakami and Bobby Celestino in the winners' podium during the awards rites.

Murakami, a former national champion, dominated the Championship I event with a 283 and a six-stroke victory over Jay Bayron.

Celestino edged Eric Gozo in the Championship II division, shooting a 77 and winning by one stroke.

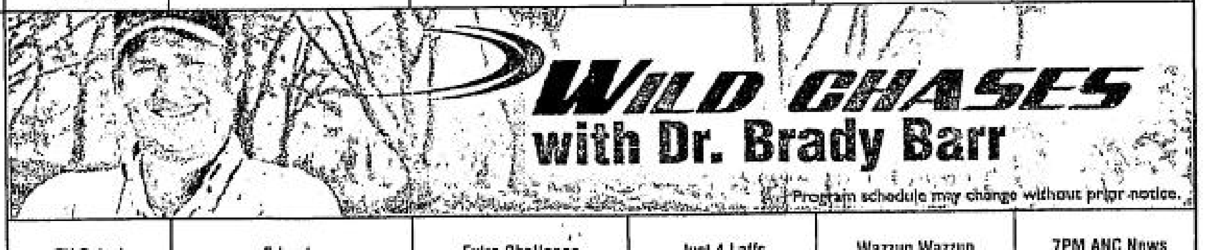
Vigan serves up NL Milo Junior Cup tennis finals

PLAYERS from the northern provinces take the spotlight when the North Luzon regional finals of the 2004 Milo Junior Tennis Cup unfolds on Oct. 8 to 10 at the Vigan Tennis Club courts.

Featured classes in the tournament organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop and backed by adidas, Malaysia Airlines and Vigan Mayor Ferdie Medina are the boys' and girls' 14-under and 12-under as well as the unisex 10-under group.

The five age-group champions in Vigan will vie in the National Finals in November against the qualifiers from South Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao for tournament berths in the 2004 Malaysia Junior Tennis Circuit starting in December.

Today's TV Schedule - Monday, October 4, 2004

Time/Channel	ABS-CBN 2	ABC 5	GMA 7	RPN 9	Studio 23	ANC
5-530 pm	Duel Masters	Cyborg Kurochan	Cowboy Bebop	Nickelodeon	Take 5	ANC Top Story
530-6 pm	Mangarap Ka	Legend of Shao Lin Kung Fu	Hunter X Hunter		My MYX	
6-630 pm	SCQ Reload	Sentro	24 Oras		Batman Animated	Straight Talk
630-7pm	TV Patrol			Entertainment Tonight	Samurai Deeper Kyo	
BETWEEN 7-730 pm						
	TV Patrol	Friends	Extra Challenge	Just 4 Laffs	Wazzup Wazzup	7PM ANC News
730-8 pm	Victim Undercover	The Apprentice	Mulawin		World's Craziest Videos	
8-830 pm	Marina			F1 World Rallye	Jake 2.0	8PM ANC News
830-9 pm		Fear Factor	Forever In My Heart			Talk Back
9-930 pm	Hiram		Marinara		Charmed	
930-10 pm	It Might be You	Big News	Lagot Ka Isusumbong Kita			
10-1030 pm	Ok Fine Whatever	Diretsahan		Newswatch Now	News Central	The World Tonight
1030-11 pm		Ringside/URCC		Sex & The City	West Wing	Business Nightly
11-1130 pm			Saksi	Cyber League		Straight Talk
1130pm - 12mn	Insider	Dream Music Videos	I-Witness		Travel Time	

WILD CHASES with Dr. Brady Barr

Program schedule may change without prior notice.

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NEW YORK—Felix "Tito" Trinidad's return to the ring was a knockout success.

Trinidad pummeled Ricardo Mayorga in the eighth round, knocking him down three times before the fight was stopped with 21 seconds to go in the round Saturday night.

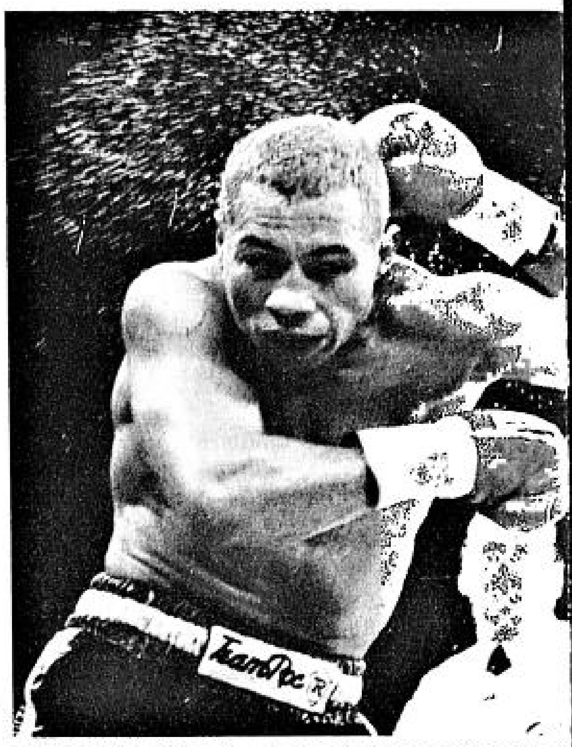
In his first fight in more than two years, Trinidad simply overwhelmed the game Mayorga with a barrage of punches, including a left hook that finished the middleweight fight in front of a raucous Madison Square Garden crowd of 17,406.

"I've been in tough wars before, but I dominated this fight," Trinidad said. "He can take a good punch and he took a lot, which was bad for him."

Trinidad, 42-1 with 35 knockouts, lost the middleweight championship three years ago to Bernard Hopkins. After one more fight, he retired, unable to get a rematch with Hopkins.

Instead, Trinidad spent "the good life" in Puerto Rico, he said. But at 31, he is back and he showed against Mayorga that he is in his prime—and probably worthy of that rematch with Hopkins.

Mayorga never had been knocked down, but he was cut under the left eye in the fifth round, and he had to stop from a low blow to the right thigh in the sixth. Referee Steve Smoger allowed him nearly two minutes to recover with 40 seconds to go in the sixth, but Mayorga never was the same the rest of the way.



FELIX Trinidad (right) sends sweat spraying off Ricardo M

Mayorga, of Nicaragua, fell to 26-5-1. He knocked down Trinidad in the third and fought particularly well in the third and fourth rounds.

"I felt go
my eye swe
shots," said
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Trinidad

Federer joins another elit

BANGKOK—Roger Federer defeated Andy Roddick, 6-4, 6-0, to win the Thailand Open on Sunday, and joined Bjorn Borg and John McEnroe as the only players to win 12 consecutive finals.

"When I came here I didn't know what to expect," said Federer. "I took it easy after the US Open and was just hoping for a good tournament, and now I've won another one so that's really fantastic.

"I didn't believe I could somehow reach 10 (titles) this year, and it just keeps on going. Obviously I'm very happy." The Swiss world No. 1 dominated the American second seed, who received treatment in the second set for a right elbow injury.

The opening game was drama in itself, with Roddick firing five aces, two double-faults and holding off three break points.

Federer had to wait until the seventh game to take the lead, breaking for 4-3 when Roddick netted a forehand.

Roddick had an opportunity to rescue the set at 5-4, holding two break points. But Federer responded with consecutive aces to get back to deuce.

Federer maintained the pressure in the second set, as Roddick made a backhand error to give Federer a break for 1-0, and a further break for 3-0 sealed the American's fate.

The trainer then attended to Roddick's elbow, but that did nothing to delay Federer's march to victory.

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said Roddick.
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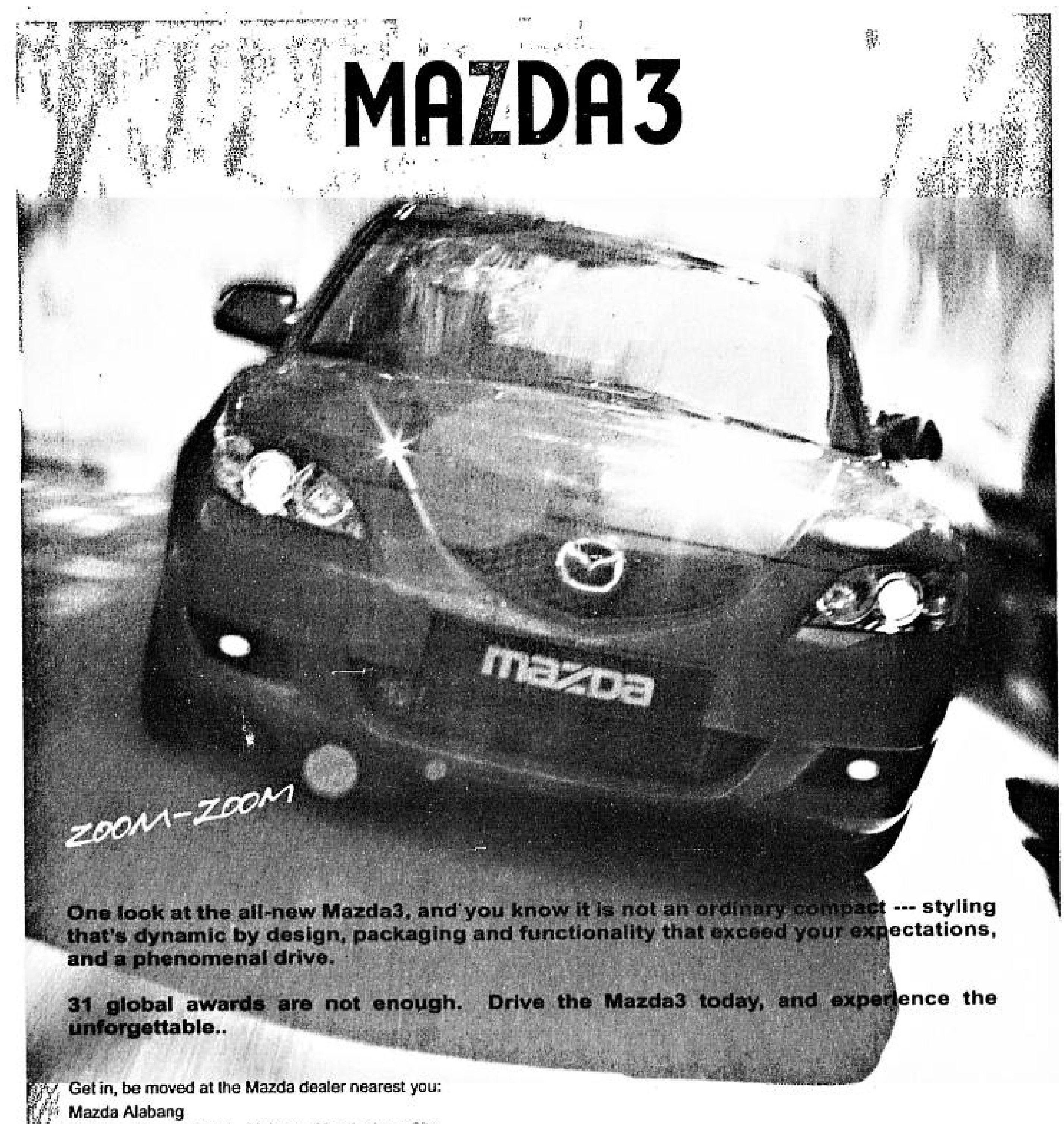

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Sharapova captures Korea Open

SEOUL—Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova trounced Marta Domachowska, 6-1, 6-1, to win the Korea Open on Sunday.

Grunting and grimacing to victory, Sharapova had too much firepower for Poland's Domachowska, who held her serve only once in the 58-minute match.

Sharapova took command in the third game after the two players had traded opening service breaks.

Pinning Domachowska to the baseline with a series of stinging service returns, Sharapova kept up the pressure until the 18-year-old Pole wilted, double-faulting to hand the Russian a 3-1 lead.

"This is the first time playing three tournaments in a row, but I feel really good," said Sharapova.

Sharapova lost in the semifinals of the recent China Open to Svetlana Kuznetsova and will play in the Japan Open later this week. *Reuters*

GAB slaps promoter with

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I WAS glad to know that the Games and Amusements Board meted out suspensions on the guilty parties involved in a farcical boxing incident in Mandaue City on Sept. 19, but I was dumbfounded to learn that, despite incontrovertible evidence that the public was deceived, a certain Josephine Ouano, the promoter of the fight card, was slapped with only a warning by the GAB. How on earth could the promoter escape with a mere slap on the wrist? This boggles the mind. What on earth is wrong with the GAB?

Methinks the GAB should show more teeth in dealing with all the people, including the promoter, who prepared the Mandaue fight card that brought embarrassment to Philippine professional boxing. In that promotion, former World Boxing Council super flyweight champion Gerry Peñalosa won his much-publicized comeback bid by stopping Saminglcao Chutipol of Thailand in the second round. The Thai went down for the third time in the second round even though he did not receive a punch. The outcome was subsequently criticized by the fans who watched it and by the media who described the fight as "farcical" and a gross mismatch. I even wrote that the way it ended was "criminal" because it robbed the paying public blind.

After two investigations, the GAB, headed by officer-in-charge lawyer Emmanuel Palabrica, suspended for six months licensed matchmaker Alijoe Jaro for deceiving the public and for betraying the trust reposed upon him as a licensed matchmaker. The GAB stressed that while Jaro may not be the registered matchmaker of the promotion, his admission that he was the matchmaker of the Peñalosa-Chutipol bout and his statements to the media that "Chutipol is a tough fighter, a good test for Gerry" have no factual basis and are tantamount to deceit. Chutipol has had only one fight as a boxer and even lost that fight prior to his meeting with the vastly experienced and dangerous Peñalosa.

The GAB also meted out another six-month suspension to Concepcion Pitogo, the officially registered

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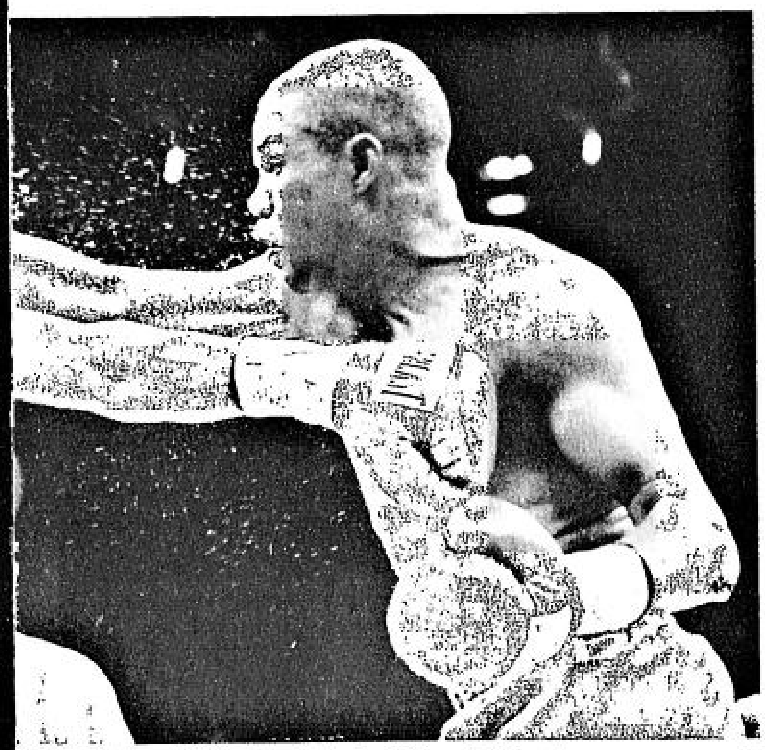


ayorga with a quick counter in their middleweight bout. AFP

d about my performance, but led up and I couldn't see some Mayorga, who was taken to a observation.

was well ahead on all three cards: 68-64, 68-64 and 67-64.

"I knew I could keep the pace up thanks to my discipline," Trinidad said. "I did. That was our game plan, to be cool and calm, and it worked perfectly." *AP*

Klitschko nails split decision over Williamson

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—Wladimir Klitschko survived a fourth-round knockdown to beat DaVarryl Williamson on points after the fight was halted prematurely by an accidental head butt.

Klitschko, who suffered a nasty cut over his right eye, won the heavyweight bout by a split decision after the ring doctor halted the scheduled 10-round fight at the end of the fifth round.

The clash of heads took place late in the fifth and opened a deep gash that the ring doctor said went down to the bone.

"I built my fight with my left jab," said Klitschko. "I was using both hands well and I wanted to continue the fight."

Two judges scored the fight for Klitschko, 49-46, 49-46, and one judge had Williamson ahead, 48-47, at the time the featured heavyweight bout was stopped on a card that also boasted two title bouts at the new outdoor Amphitheatre at Caesar's Palace.

Williamson was frustrated with the ending. He said his plan was to tire Klitschko by forcing him to go into the later rounds.

He knocked Klitschko down in the fourth round with a straight right hand to the head.

"This is unfinished business," Williamson said.

Klitschko (43-3, 39 KOs) tried to downplay the knockdown saying, "I was off balance and he caught me with a right hand."

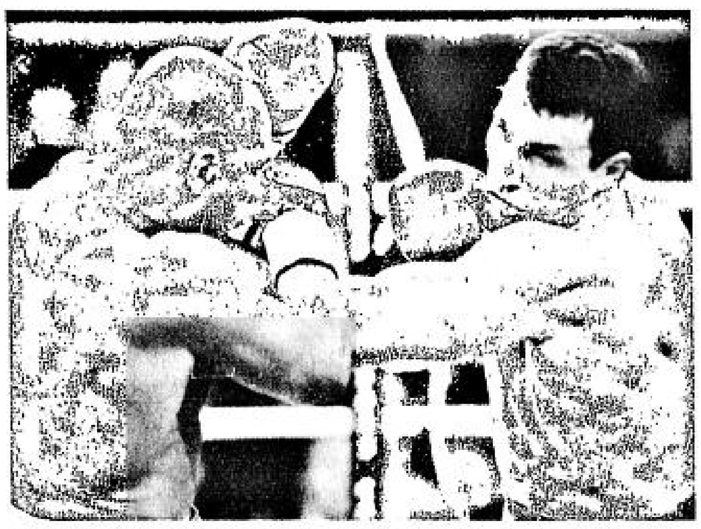
The odd ending and knockdown did little to boost Klitschko's sagging credibility.

It wasn't long ago that the younger Wladimir was being hailed as the stronger of the two fighting Klitschko brothers.

Now older brother Vitali holds the World Boxing Council title while Wladimir's stock has fallen.

On April 10, Wladimir was floored in the fifth round by Lamon Brewster in a fight for the vacant World Boxing Organization title.

Vitali will make the first defense of his WBC title against Britain's Danny Williams in December. *AFP*



WLADIMIR Klitschko (right) looks hardly impressive in his match against DaVarryl Williamson, winning via a split decision after getting knocked out in the fourth round. AP

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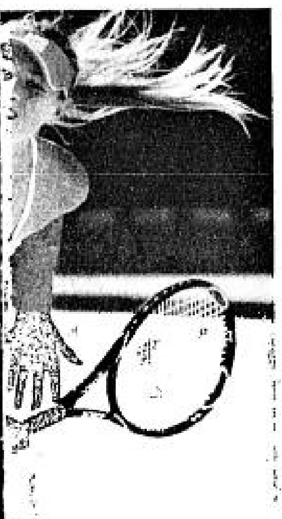
bow yesterday against Marat n't think that made a differeen beating people all year,"

ınd gave it a shot, but when I ie room yesterday I started to in one of the tendons in my

ust strained it, but it made it it there.

best shot I could, but once I he second I definitely didn't oout my chances.

ng with half a deck of cards l record against Roger with a rds, so it was a little disap- *Reuters*



PLAYING the second of a busy three-week schedule, Maria Sharapova looks as fresh as ever in beating Marta Domachowska for the Korean Open title. REUTERS

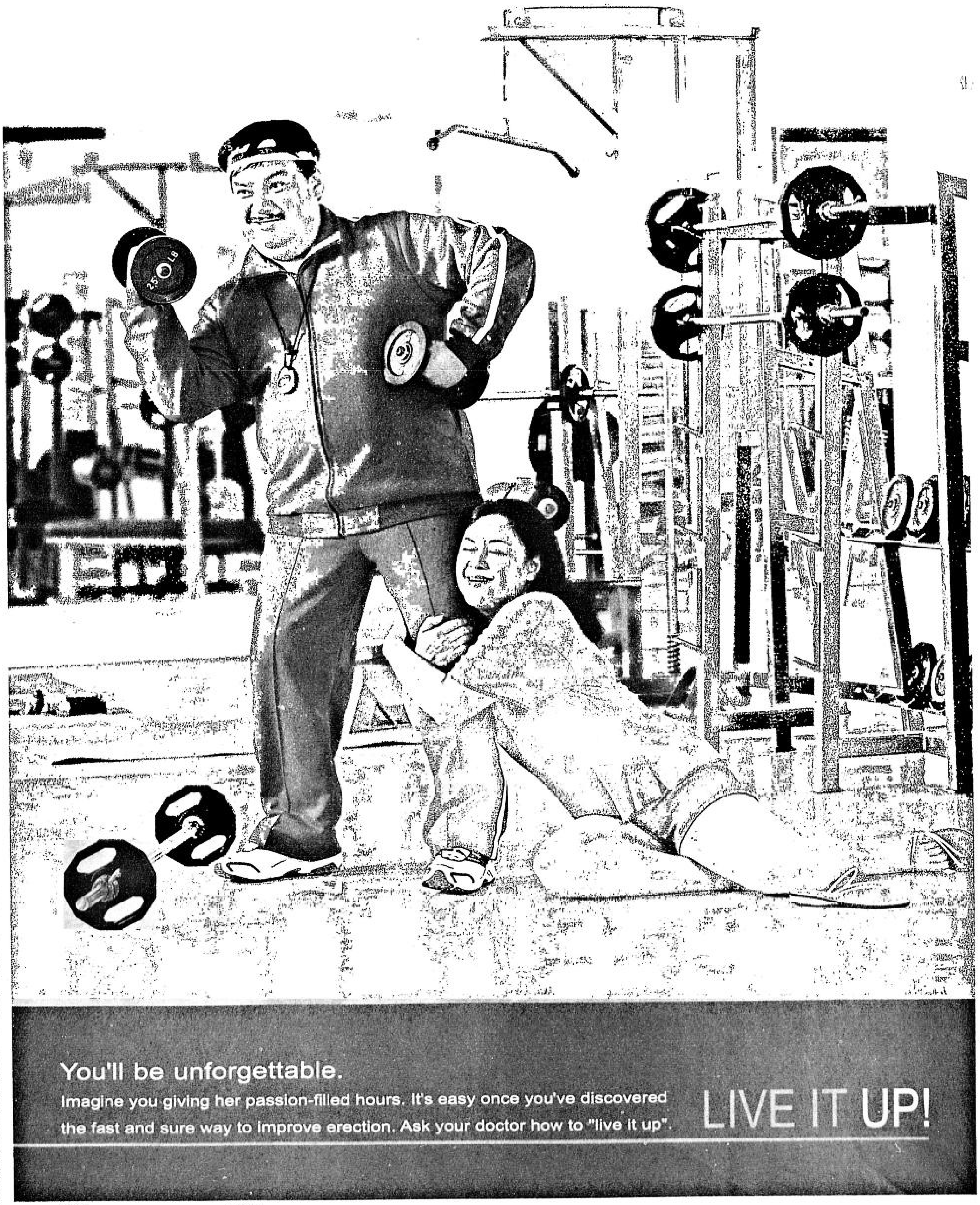
warning

naker of that Mandaue card, owing her license as matchto be used by Jaro in this parfight and for not lifting a fincheck whether or not the was in order.

the other hand, Chutipol, the itsy, was banned for two years ghting in the Philippines "for out with a performance not of a professional boxer."

noter Ouano relied on the ntation of the matchmaker. ccording to the GAB, "She be faulted for doing so benatchmaking is a specializaid that is precisely the reason id position is licensed by the Ouano was merely reprid and warned.

ne, that brought little solace. I rayed: The GAB should not rring promoters lightly. Of it should also find ways to ite the sport's other problems, reported kickbacks, fan, falsified records, sleazy iers, rigged ratings and whiscampaign of corruption. Like it, pro boxing is on the ropes re are only a few boxers in ld of Manny Pacquiao who able of seducing the fight fans venue by the thousands.



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Retirement an option for Malone

LOS ANGELES—Karl Malone is "retirement bound" but he has left the door ajar for a return to the National Basketball Association once his injuries heal, player agent Dwight Manley said.

"He is not closing any doors but he's going in a different direction that obviously is retirement bound," Manley told the Los Angeles Times.

"If he wanted to play today he couldn't anyway. He will be able to in the future."

The 41-year-old Los Angeles Laker is still recovering from right knee surgery and no career decision would be made until he is fully healthy, Manley said.

Malone is a 14-time all-star and is the second leading scorer in NBA history. He told Lakers owner Jerry Buss he would play for Los Angeles if he decided to play again.

The Lakers open their training camp next Tuesday in San Diego. Their first pre-season match is Oct. 12 against Seattle in Anaheim and they begin the season on Nov. 2 by hosting Denver.

AFP

WORLD GOLF

Els still 2 shots up

THOMASTOWN, Ireland—Ernie Els stayed on track for a maiden World Golf Championship title with a four-under-par 68 in the WGC-American Express Championship third round on Saturday.

The world No. 3, chasing his first victory since the PGA Tour's Memorial tournament in early June, ended another day of wildly fluctuating weather two strokes clear of the field.

South African Els, who would replace Tiger Woods as the game's second-ranked player by winning this week, mixed five birdies with a bogey to finish on 15-under 201 at a rain-sodden Mount Juliet.

"I've got to be happy with the score I shot, I grinded out a 68," said the 34-year-old Els after playing through bright sunshine, driving rain and gusting winds. "I was a little off here and there but I got the ball up and down when I needed to.

"I made some better shots at the end there, on 17 and 18, and hopefully I can take that into tomorrow."

Denmark's Thomas Bjorn, after a bogey-free 66, was alone in second place with British Open champion Todd Hamilton, Ireland's Padraig Harrington and Britain's David Howell a further shot back in a tie for third at 12 under.

Hamilton returned a 69 while Harrington, urged on by his home galleries, and Howell carded matching 66s.

Defending Champion Woods, a doubtful starter for the tournament after straining his shoulder last week sleeping awkwardly on a flight to Orlando, returned a second successive 70 to lie seven off the pace.

The eight-time major winner, bidding for his third successive WGC-American Express Championship title and fourth in all, was one over for the day after nine holes but picked up three shots after the turn to climb into a share of eighth place.

"I'm going to need some help tomorrow and I understand the weather is supposed to be terrible," said the 28-year-old American.

"But I'm still seven shots back, which is a long way back, especially when Ernie is playing the way he is."

Els, two strokes ahead overnight following his brilliant 64 on Friday, stayed in front with birdies at the par-five fifth and par-five eighth, where he sank a 20-foot putt.

Reuters

PADRAIG Harrington keeps the home gallery hopeful as he stays three-shots off the lead. REUTERS

ICTSI-La Salle rejoins PBL Open tourney

A STRONGER, wiser and sharper ICTSI-La Salle squad returns to the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) for the season-ending Open Championship set to start on Oct. 23.

After regaining the UAAP crown at the expense of the favored Far Eastern University, ICTSI-La Salle has been tipped this early as one of the teams to beat along with perennial finalist Welcoat Paints and Montaña Pawnshop.

Even league officials are excited over the comeback of ICTSI-La Salle.

"Aside from their traditional rival, the Ateneo Eagles, the Archers have to prepare themselves since the Tamaraws are expected to get even with them," said Commissioner Chino Trinidad.

Viva Mineral Water, which won the Unity Cup over Welcoat Paints, is built around the core of FEU Tamaraws, giving way to another Mark Cardona-Arwind Santos rivalry.

ICHIRO SUZUKI
MARINERS

HIT-MAKER: Seattle Mariners' Ichiro Suzuki gestures to fans Saturday in Seattle, where he was honored for breaking George Sisler's single season hit record Friday night. AP

Miriam cagebelles stay alive

MIRIAM College lived to fight another day as it nipped Centro Escolar University, 56-55, Saturday, to stay in the hunt for a semifinal seat in the WNCAA 35th season seniors' basketball tournament at the St. Scholastica's gym.

Miriam, which tied CEU at 6-3, must beat semifinalist Lyceum in the final playing day of the eliminations and hope for a Rizal Technological University (7-2) win over CEU to avoid the complication of a three-way tie.

St. Scholastica's College closed out its campaign with a 48-38 victory over Emilio Aguinaldo College to end the season at 3-7.

Host school San Beda College Alabang also won, 64-35, over University of Asia & the Pacific.

In volleyball, defending champion Lyceum completed its 10-game sweep of the elims after downing RTU, 25-20, 25-18, 26-24.

Palos Verdes grabs big Sta. Lucia lead

HOST club Palos Verdes Team 6 used a strong performance to emerge the runaway provisional Group III leader of the first batch of entries in the first leg of the Sta. Lucia Tour in Davao over the weekend.

Jing Tan, Ronald Galicia, and Jong Tan combined for 265 points to pull away from Eagle Ridge 11, which managed only 203, and Alta Vista 11 (197).

The battle in the other divisions was tight with a revitalized Orchard taking the Group II lead through its Team 2 and Alta Vista Team 1 showing the way in Group II by close margins in the Tour sponsored by Globe Platinum.

Carl Almario, Joseph Stevens and Edito Tirol started their bid for another Group I title with 141 points on the first day and 155 the next for a 296 that put them one point up on all-Korean Eagle Ridge Team 1.

Palos Verdes 1 failed to capitalize on the leg-leading 107-point effort of Marcelino Tibor and settled for third at 286.

Orchard looks poised to recover from its anemic show last year as Alfredo Lim, Luis Bustamante, Roberto Reyes and Ric Nimo pooled 245 points on rounds of 121-124 to slip ahead by one over the Bobby Barria-led Alta Vista Team 8.

Also sponsoring this year's Tour are Samsung, Omega, Titleist, Footjoy and Philippine Airlines while Marco Polo (Davao), Marriot (Cebu) and The Bellevue (Manila) are partner hotels.

Alan Edgardo Alegre of Tour newcomer Summit Point scored a 98 that installed him as the Class C individual leader by six over Palos Verdes' Ronald Galicia and Jing Tan.

Tibor took a two-point lead over Jufil Sato of Alta Vista 2 in Class A while Bobby Wee of Palos Verdes led by six over teammate Milton Liu and Barria by six with his 96-point total in Class B.

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Biggest little race marks its first year

LORENZA Cabatac came from her father's wake to run the race of her young life. Nichols Cordial, in slippers, mustered the strength to finish first so he can buy a new pair of shoes.

These and other heart-warming anecdotes make the first full year of the Beam Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy trully a fulfilling one for the race organizers.

The 12-year-old Cabatac and Cordial characterize today's young students that Beam Toothpaste hopes to reach out to and draw toward the sport of running. And most of these kids from public elementary and high schools didn't even know they had what it takes to run a race until they actually did.

"We reach out to students, mostly those who can't afford to pay entry fees to join a race," said Nelson Macaraig, head of the organizing Jonel Promotions who thanked Beam Toothpaste general manager Baby Yao for bankrolling the twice-a-month, 5-km race conducted by the Media Runners.

While the event also occasionally featured legs featuring some of the country's top runners, the Beam Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy also staged free races even in missionary routes where running is unheard of.

The Beam Zest-O Patakbong went to as far north as Baguio and as far south as Batangas, but it was the venues in between that allowed the race to establish its niche in the running scene.

The Philippine Military Academy in Baguio City and the Philippine National Police Academy in Silang, Cavite, welcomed races set exclusively for its cadets.

And the race took up causes like the preservation of a museum in Pila, Laguna, and fund-raising for school activities.

It once helped the Tandang Sora Elementary School's Palarong Pambansa-bound volleyball team in raising training funds and acquiring equipment from the Philippine Sports Commission during a race held in UP Dilliman. It also pitched in for the Gen. Ricardo Papa National High School's athletic meet in Taguig.

"There are things that are much bigger than a race," Macaraig said.

Velodrome action kicks off cycling...

From page A32

grated Cycling Federation of the Philippines or PhilCycling, headed by Bert Lina, is organizing.

Velodrome racing gets special emphasis in the National Open because of its potential as a rich gold medal source for the country in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Meanwhile, cyclists from Malaysia and Vietnam are planing in tomorrow for the 10th Asian MTB Championships which is supported by Air21, Tour Pilipinas Inc., the Philippine Sports Commission, the Philippine Olympic Committee, Kontrol, Cargohaus, Dos-1, e-konek, Mail and More and Agua de Laguna.

Teams from seven more countries are arriving in the next few days for the continental championships which will be conducted in two world-class courses in Sitio Magarwak, Barangay Sta. Lourdes, Puerto Princesa City prepared by Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn

Japan is expected to stamp its mark in the annual event staged by the Asian Cycling Confederation and the Union Cycliste Internationale.

The massed start race in Tagaytay, to be supervised by PhilCycling road commission chair Paquito Rivas, will start at 8 a.m.

SPORTSWATCH

One-on-one at Las Piñas

THE ONE-ON-ONE duels between cockfighting heavyweights resume today at the Las Piñas Coliseum. The Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 5-Stag Derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Pagcor will see the Ramon Mancenares-Tony Faustino entry EDL Farms, which currently leads the Stagfighter of the Year race with 15.5 points, tangling with top favorite Patrick Antonio, who will field the same line from Californian Jorge Torres that won him the crown in last Friday's Pasay 5-stag Derby. Antonio's Sagupan Complexor 3000 BPZ and the team of Pol Estrellado-Boy Reyes (PEBR) tallied 13.5 points each in the Stagfighter race. Benjie Lim's Mt. Banahaw fighters (Love U Papa) are in solo third with 12.5 points. Today's 56-fight program will start at 6 p.m. For inquiries, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

80 fights at Roligon today

AT LEAST 80 fights await derby fans as the Stag Festival 5-Stag National Derby resumes at 5 p.m. today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit with the second set of competitors vying for finals berth set on Wednesday. Hosted by Rolly Ligon, in cooperation with Thunderbird Baby Stag Booster and Thunderbird Stag Developer, the annual event stakes a P1 million guaranteed cash prize. World Slasher champions Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo and William Go lead the cast that also includes Blandy Tolentino, Dicky Lim, Allan Siaco, James Uy, Allan Tan, Sonny Lagon, Dong Lacson, Francis Lumunsad, Francis Afable, Tos Reyes and Boy Lechon. Last Saturday's opener saw Slasher titlist Rey Briones winning all four fights through his entries CLG Enforcer (with Col. Gara) and Showtime Masbate.

BUENAVISTA: First among the stars. AP

Buenavista reigns

Long-distance ace is adidas king of the road

THERE'S no slowing down the country's long distance running king.

Olympian marathoner Eduardo Buenavista proved this yesterday when he easily ruled yesterday's 8th adidas King of the Road race at the adidas Sports Kamp in Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

The 4-foot-11 Buenavista, who was 67th among 81 finishers in the recent Athens Olympiad, clocked a personal best of 29 minutes and 29 seconds for 10-kilometer event.

National trackster Julius Sermona came in second at 30:59 while two-time Milo Marathon champion Allan Ballester settled for third in 31:05.

Bernardo Desamito and Reynaldo delos Reyes placed fourth and fifth, respectively. Last year's adidas King of the Road Alley Quisay placed 13th in 35:19.

"Delos Reyes was ahead in the first 2K and when I caught up with him, I went all the way," said Buenavista, who holds the Philippine record in the 5K, 10K and 42K events.

Buenavista's old 10K mark was 29:57 recorded during the Milo Marathon elimination run in 2002. His national 10K record in the track oval is 29:02.

Mercedita Manipol led all the way in the distaff side of the race co-presented by Globe Gentext and sponsored by McDonald's, Snickers chocolate bar, adidas watches, Powerade, Viva Mineral Water, adidas Fragrance, Paintball Empire and Milo.

Manipol, also a national team mainstay, timed 35:51 minutes.

Former Milo Marathon champion Cristabel Martes was second in 37:25, while last year's Queen of the Road Liza Yambao clocked 38:13 for third.

Liza Delfin (38:58) and Gloria Diaz (39:07) followed in that order.

Buenavista and Manipol pocketed P10,000 cash and P10,000 worth of gift certificate from Adidas. They will also represent the country in the International King of the Road next week in Korea.

Virtual stroll for Cover Girl in Grand Futurity

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

COVER Girl turned the Grand Futurity Stakes race into a stroll at the Santa Ana Park yesterday.

"*Parang nag-*jogging *lang. Magandang* warmup *sa takbo niyang kasunod* (She simply jogged to victory. It's a good warm-up for her next race)," said star jockey Jonathan Hernandez, after Cover Girl cruised to a five-length victory in the 1,600-meter trip.

Knowing Cover Girl was a cut above her three other rivals, Hernandez allowed the Khozaam-Gallant Native filly to coast behind Paramount in the early going before guiding her to the lead at the far turn.

Hernandez has now steered Cover Girl to four straight victories since Aug. 7. All told, Cover Girl has nailed down 14 wins in 18 runs. Prior to yesterday's assignment, Cover Girl won in the Founders' Cup, Lakambini Stakes and topped a class division race.

Next up for Cover Girl, who won P250,000, is the much-awaited 3-year-old Fillies contest in the 5th Philtobo Grand Championship Day on Oct. 17, also at Santa Ana, where she will be facing tougher opponents like Moab, Cool Runnings and Concorde.

Cover Girl negotiated the race in 1:41 flat, although her best time over the distance was 1:39 when she ruled the Cojuangco Cup last May 23.

Native Land took runner-up honors. Fear Factor wound up fourth and last.

Earlier, Speed Machine rallied hard under Fernando Raquel Jr. to nip Hazmoore by a head in the White Mile race. Showing her upset of Bulakeña recently was for real, the favored Speed Machine charged down the wire mightily to salvage the victory in 1:42.

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ASIAN M'BIKE PRELUDE

Velodrome races kick off RP cycling festival

VELODROME racing makes a comeback today with the revival of the National Open track and road championships which are among the featured events of the Philippine Cycling Festival.

Fifteen gold medals will be up for grabs in cycling's track competition at the Quezon City Amoranto Velodrome, one of only four such facilities in Southeast Asia.

A 168-kilometer massed start race in an out-and-back course in Tagaytay City is also scheduled today followed by a 40-km individual time trial tomorrow from Batangas to Tagaytay.

The track and road events serve as appetizers to the 10th Asian Mountain Bike Championships in Puerto Princesa City, which the Inte-

VELODROME/ A31

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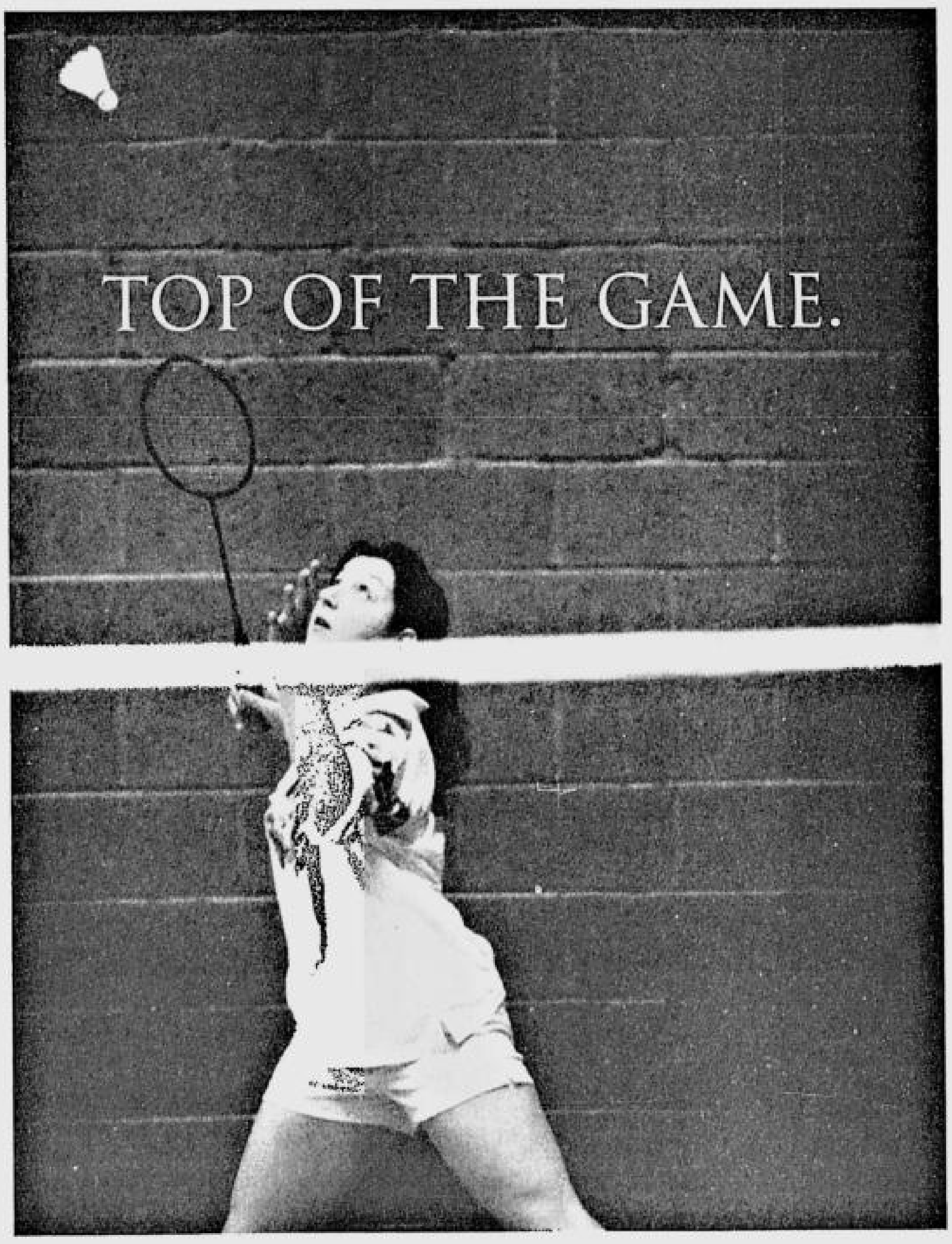
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Editor Louie C. Camino

FUN TIME. Cheri Mercado and Christianna, 3 months old AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Cheri Mercado's good news: Motherhood is fun

/A34

"THE WAY We Were." Basil Valdez (left) and Rico J. Puno

Basil, Rico J in one show for the first time

/A37

GRENADE IN HER HOUSE

Edu was the first person I called, says Ai Ai

By Marinel R. Cruz

SOMETHING SPECIAL. "What's important," says Ai Ai, "is that Edu and I are still at ease with each other."

EDU MANZANO was the first person Ai Ai de las Alas called when she learned that a live grenade had been found inside her house last Friday night, but he didn't pick up the phone.

"So I called Arnel (Ignacio) instead," the comedienne told INQUIRER Entertainment last Saturday. "I asked Arnel to help me contact a SWAT team to check the grenade."

Ai Ai said she was not disappointed that Edu did not answer her call when she needed him. Reports have been linking them romantically.

"Edu is very dear to me," said Ai Ai.

Of the reports that said Edu, her co-host on "MTB: Ang Saya-saya," has been courting her, she added, "I don't want to put him in a bad spot by reacting to every piece of write-up about us."

Edu is also the chair of the Optical Media Board (OMB), formerly known as the Video Regulatory Board.

According to Ai Ai, a joke that Edu cracked while they were hanging out with the staff members of "MTB" might have led people into thinking that they had an intimate relationship. But Ai Ai refused to say what the joke was.

"What's important now is that our working relationship is okay, and that despite the write-ups, we're still at ease with each other," Ai Ai said.

Friday night, members of the Central Police District-Special Weapons and Tactics (CPD-SWAT) found an M2K fragmentation grenade in the driver's quarters of Ai Ai's house.

Ai Ai's driver, Amboy, found the grenade at about 10:30 p.m., according to reports reaching the CPD's Command and Control Office.

Ai Ai said a friend's driver, whom she identified only as William, brought the grenade to her house almost seven months ago. But William did not intentionally leave the grenade in the driver's quarters, she added.

"What happened was not intentional," she said. "It was sheer stupidity. He must have thought it was an *anting-anting* (amulet) or something. It must have excited him. My manager (Boy Abunda) and I already talked with him and his employer about it."

The actress said she would not press charges against William.

Her current driver, Amboy, was cleaning his room when he found the grenade in a corner, according to the police report. He called security guard Alejandro Oril, who reported the incident to the police.

Ai Ai said her former driver knew about the grenade and even told her eldest son about it. "But my son ignored it because he thought it was just a joke," she said. "Fortunately, it didn't explode."

She said her children were with her Friday night while she was taping for the sitcom "Tanging Ina."

"But there were people inside the house that day," she said. "I don't want to think of what could have happened if that grenade had exploded while the maids were cleaning that part of the house." *With a report by Tina G. Santos*

EDU MANZANO

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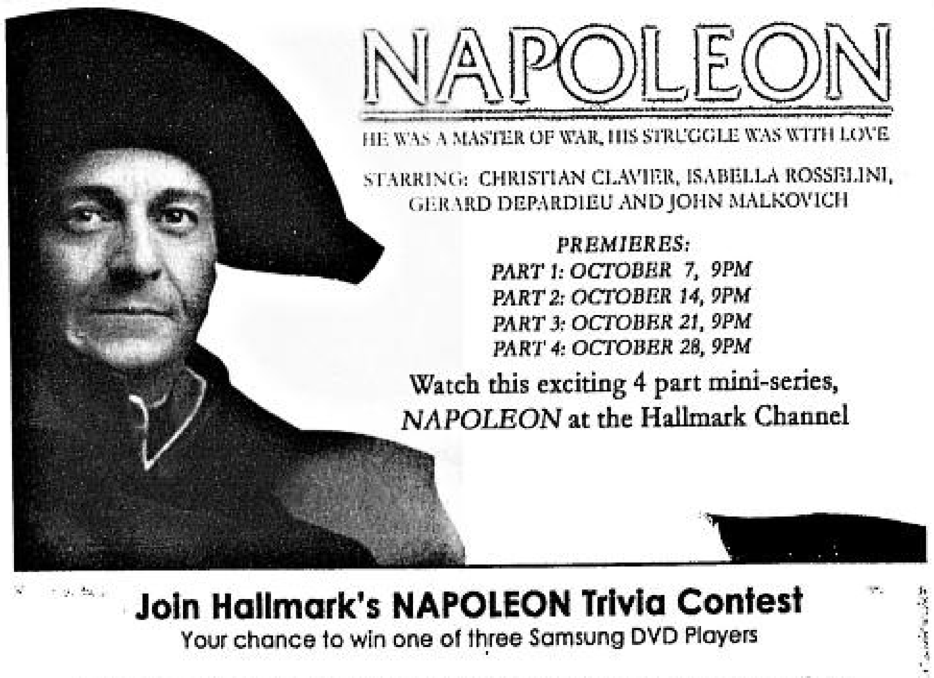

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The good news is, CHERI MERCADO thinks motherhood is fun

PLAYTIME. "It's like having a toy," gushes the mom of 3-month-old Ianna

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by August dela Cruz

BEFORE the revitalized ABC 5 hired her as news anchor, Cheri Mercado-Santos was already thinking of leaving her former network, ABS-CBN, because she was pregnant.

"I was even thinking of leaving the industry because I didn't want to be stressed while pregnant," says Cheri, mother of 3-month-old Christianna or Ianna. "I didn't want to go through that kind of a daily grind while I was having my baby because they say the baby feels whatever you're feeling."

Cheri says she used to work for eight to 12 hours when she was at ABS-CBN. She also used to host "Magandang Umaga Bayan" in the morning and anchor the "Global News" late at night for the "Kapamilya" network.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

"When you're pregnant you can't be on cam, depending on the ABS-CBN bosses," she points out. "That's why I liked the way (ABC 5) management welcomed me, with open arms, even while I was pregnant. I also liked the feeling that I was free to suggest a lot of things. ABS-CBN already has a lot of brains. Now my ideas are being heard. I'm part of the conceptualization of the shows that might come soon."

Cheri says 2003 was one of the most important years in her life. "Last year, I changed jobs, names, residences and civil status," she says. "It was a turning point in my life. Everything happened in a year."

Unlike other moms, Cheri does not find motherhood too demanding. Although she wakes up at ungodly hours to breastfeed Ianna, Cheri says, "Everything else is fun. It's like you have a toy.

"It's true that your lifestyle changes when you have a baby. I used to spend most of my time on my work. When I wasn't working, I was always looking for places to go. In fact, I never got to eat at home because I was always out. Now, while I'm still at work, I want to go home."

Home for Cheri is the Santos residence in Quezon City. "Personally, I'm enjoying my time at home. But when I'm not with my family, I'm at work."

Cheri starts her day at 11 a.m. She leaves the house before 7 p.m. for the 9:30 p.m. newscast of "The Big News" on ABC 5. On Tuesdays, she goes to the INQUIRER office in Makati City to tape for INQUIRER TV, which she has been hosting since September.

"When I first heard of it, I thought it was brilliant for INQUIRER to be venturing into television." says Cheri. "I'm honored to be a part of the project. The thing I like about INQUIRER TV is that its content is very thorough. One of my frustrations in being in a daily newscast before was that there really wasn't much time to do research."

Cheri replaced Philippine Basketball League commissioner Chino Trinidad as host of INQUIRER TV.

Cheri says being a mother also changed her fashion preference. "I used to like blacks and browns. But now I go for white, baby blue, baby pink and light orange. I don't know if it has something to do with giving birth and having a baby. Maybe it's because I like everything that surrounds my baby to be clean. You could never make me wear pink before.

"I think I'm going to discard a lot of my high heels because I prefer flats now. You have to give me a good reason to wear high heels."

She says she used to share her passion for malling with her husband, Mike Santos. "He's a certified mall rat," Cheri says of her ex-stockbroker husband. "He knows every store. We used to go to the mall twice or thrice a week. Even during my free time, I used to window-shop with friends. Now, it's a shallow thing for me. I'd rather take care of the baby."

Shirts. "My favorite sporty casual shirt is from the States. *Ginamit ko itong pang-harabas doon.* It's my shopping and sightseeing shirt. It's warm. The fabric is really thick. It's also reversible. I look young when I'm wearing it. In the States, they thought I was still in high school.

"I have lots of tops from Nulla. I love pairing them with jeans. They're casual and sexy at the same time. I wore them a lot before I got pregnant.

"I love dressy, flirty tops that go nicely with jeans. I loved wearing this white top until I was four or five months pregnant. I had second thoughts buying it because I found it too pricey for something so simple."

Jackets. "When it comes to coverage and newscast, I'm a moody dresser. Sometimes, I want to look like a ball breaker. Sometimes, I want to look sweet. So I have I-mean-business shirts. I wear them when I have interviews with personalities, politicians. I like mixing them with my fun shirts.

"I have both stylish and structured jackets or blazers. Structured jackets are more formal, tailored and a bit padded. I buy most of my structured blazers from Theme. They have my size. But I hardly wear them anymore.

"Now I prefer those that are stylish and don't have pads. Mango has lots of them. They make you feel you're not so stiff and you're not so far from the audience. It's easy to move in them.

"I usually wear my Abercrombie cotton jacket when I go to the malls or to the gym. I love the color, yellow and baby blue. I also have a light brown Chinese-collared cotton jacket I bought here. I like the way the collar folds."

Dresses. "I have my dresses made because I need to have dresses. It's not really a preference. I don't like being in skirts. Mia Urquico makes most of my dresses, like this Chinese-inspired dress that I wore during a Chinese New Year coverage for ABS-CBN. Mia encourages me to be girly once in a while.

"I wore this dress, also by Mia Urquico, at my civil wedding. The style was by both of us, but it was mostly my idea. I liked a Narciso Rodriguez dress that looks like this. I was four months pregnant then so we decided on an empire cut. Mia is very good with details."

Jeans. "I've been wearing my favorite pair since college. It's so worn out. It's my reliable comfy jeans."

Rubber shoes. "I've had this worn-out DKNY pair since 1999. I don't have to tie the laces and it goes with almost everything. It's perfect with jeans. I'm always wearing heels when I'm in the office, so when I'm outside I like wearing rubber shoes.

"My second favorite is my pair of red Pumas. I wore it when I visited Ground Zero in New York a year after 9/11."

Slip-ons. "I got these basic black heels on sale at Myx in Greenbelt. They're flirty because you can tie them around your ankles. Even when they're three and a half inches high, they're still comfortable.

"My white slip-ons from Tyler are nice and girly, and they go with a lot of things when I'm not working."

Accessories. "Even before they became in fashion, I already had a Swarovski-studded brooch. I thought I could never wear it. Now, it's in fashion. Too bad I lost it. What I have now is acrylic.

"Pearls are my basic accessories. I used to think pearls made me look old. Now, they go with a lot of corporate outfits.

"These bracelets are from Souk. They're kind of pricey but they're worth it. I wear them often, and a lot of people think they're nice."

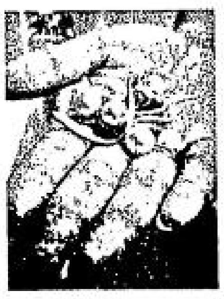
Bags. "I love big bags, but there are outfits that don't go with them.

"I love bright-colored bags, like this fuchsia bag made of coconut shells. I also like them with beads and prints. This white lacey bag is nice, especially when you wear jeans."

Books. "I bought a 'Sex in the City' book when I was in New York. It has a map of New York and tells all the memorable things that happened to the girls in the series, as well as where they bought their favorite outfits.

"I've just finished Dan Brown's 'Da Vinci Code.' It's super-*galing*. It somehow answers a lot of questions about Christianity. I love the way he got out of the tangle of putting the Catholic Church and the Opus Dei in such a bad light."

BLACK pearls

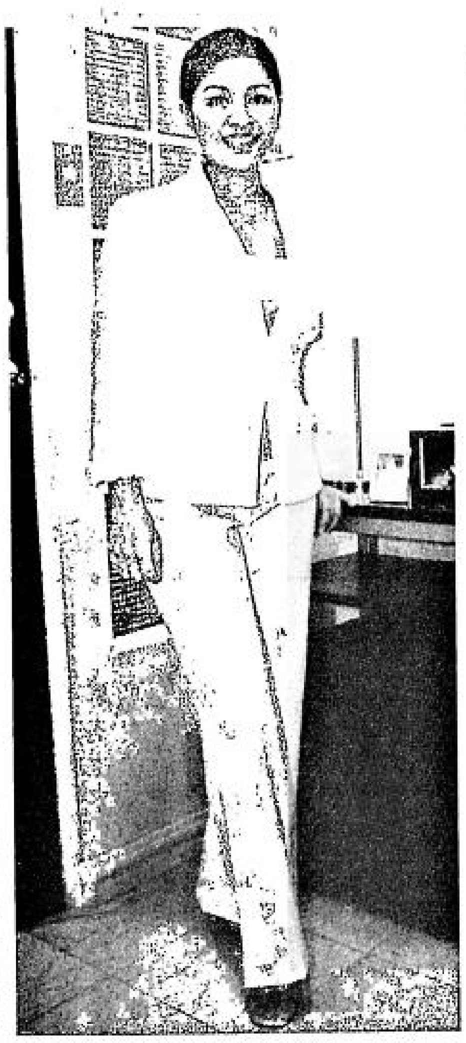


WHITE pearls

SOUK bracelet

WELL-HEELED. Flirty pair (above) and other high heels (below)

COVERAGE CHIC she exudes when she wears these during coverage and newscasts, whether she wants to look sweet or businesslike



WHITE WAY. From black and brown, she has switched to white and other clean colors.

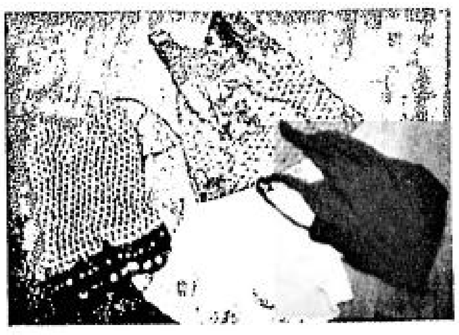
ACCESSORIZE, accessorize, which she does with basic pearls and other accessories

THE DA VINCI CODE
UNCOVERING THE BEAT
Beauty Secrets

RELIGION AND 'SEX' are among her reading fare

OLD RELIABLES are her DKNY rubber shoes, bought in 1999, jeans from college and Abercrombie jacket

LADY bag prefers them in bright colors, beads, even coco shells



COOL DRESSING. Most of her dresses are by Mia Urquico (left) while many of her tops are sexy, casual ones from Nulla.

Ungainly combination

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE'VE watched the first three episodes of GMA 7's new telenovela, "Forever in My Heart," and can share the following observations:

The series combines romance, music, action and fated love elements—unfortunately, in a rather ungainly and sometimes confusing combination. For instance, **Regine Velasquez** plays a wedding planner, but she breaks out into beautiful song at a wedding ceremony when the singer her company has hired has a problem.

Despite its action element (**Richard Gomez** plays a rather shady character), facile touches like this give the series a rather frivolous and even fantasy air.

This is further exacerbated when the two leads plus **Ariel Rivera** are caught in a volcanic explosion that traps them in a hotel in Tagaytay. Regine and Ariel are in the same room, and incredibly spend their time together trading insightful musings about life, love and "soul mates."

With the suffering carnage all around them, it's the height of unreality for them to "sensitively" engage in such profound talk!

On the other hand, the show's handling of the chaos after the volcanic eruption is visually dynamic and charged with gritty drama. That's all to the good, and it's unfortunate that the smaller scenes involving the lead actors weren't staged with similar realism.

Another upbeat aspect to the series is its "rediscovery" of Ariel Rivera. We've always felt that Ariel has been underutilized as an actor, so it's good that GMA 7 has put him back in thespic harness.

We'll continue watching "Forever in My Heart" from time to time, and hope that it will become more believably realistic from here on in. Sure, telenovelas are generally escapist productions, but in these edgier times, a greater sense of reality makes for better viewer empathy.

New MTV shows

"THE ASSISTANT" airs every Friday at 10:30 p.m. with replays at 5 p.m. on Sunday and 1:30 p.m. on Monday. In the wacky reality show, 12 Hollywood wannabes want to break into the biz, but first have to survive **Andy Dick**.

"MTV Supahstar" is telecast every Wednesday at 7 p.m. It's time to meet the search's finalists. See what happens when casting directors **Tim Yap**, **Andrew E.** and **Radha** pare down the talents from Manila, Cebu, Davao and Baguio.

"Rouge" will premiere at 7 p.m. on Oct. 7. Regular telecasts are at 8:30 p.m. every Thursday. MTV's first ever regional series, which includes our **Denise Laurel** and **Mariel Rodriguez**, combine comedy, drama, action and style.

"Rouge" is a team of four sophisticated professionals with good looks, musical talent and martial arts skills. From sold-out rock performances to breaking up a nasty fraternity, no task is impossible for the "Rouge" ladies.

Music conference

THE FIRST Asian Music and Marketing Conference will be held on Oct. 20 and 21 at the Edsa Shangri-la. The conference features music and marketing topics, campaign showcases, workshops, clinics and exhibits.

It will also look into the impact of new technology on the way consumers use music, and the emergence of new markets.

Evening events include live performances, new talent showcases and trade cocktails.

.Confirmed speakers include music marketer **Ruth Simmons**, Walt Disney International's **Raymund Miranda**, and radio producer **Steve Ackerman**. The welcome address, "The Emotional Power of Music," will be delivered by Ms **Emily Abrera**, chairman emeritus, McCann-Erickson.

New series

CARTOON Network's new series, "Atomic Betty," premiered last Oct. 3. It airs weekends at 9:30 a.m., with replays at 6 p.m.

Betty is a sweet and brainy girl to her family and friends, but when the galaxy beckons, she's transformed into "Atomic Betty, Galactic Guardian and Defender of the Cosmos."

With the help of her co-pilot, Sparky, and her robot, X-5, Betty zips around in her Galactic Starcruiser to battle super-villains like the Supreme Overload, Maximus I.Q., and their henchmen.

UNGAINLY/ A36

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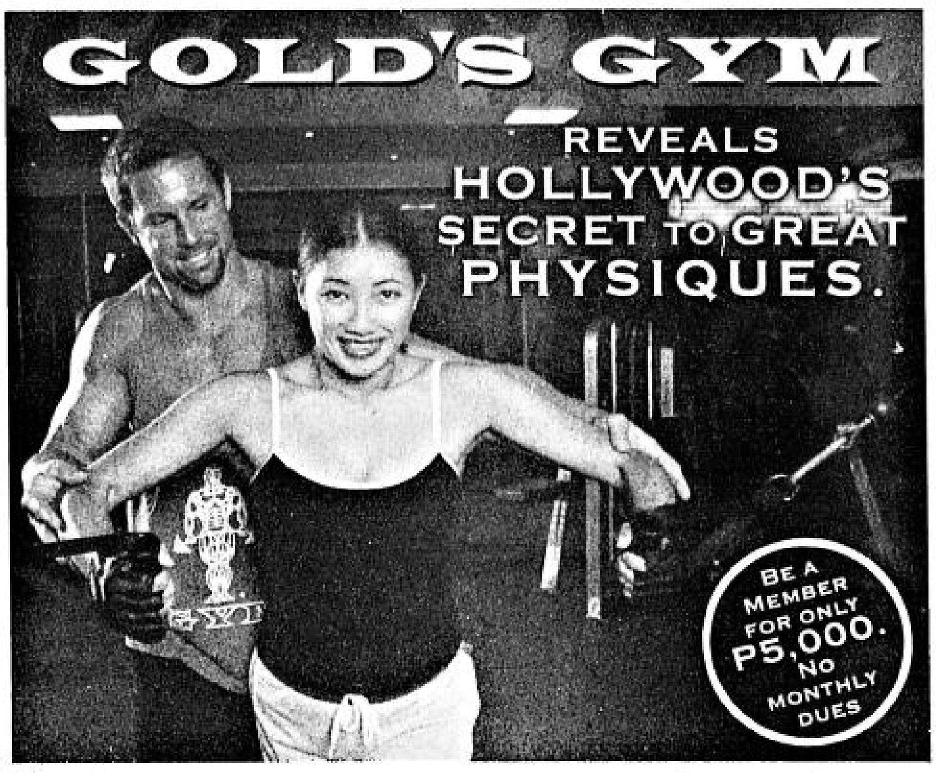

GOLD'S GYM, VENICE,CA,USA - Ever wonder how movie stars get their "Hollywood" physique? Ever wonder if that six-pack is special effects or real muscle tone? For the first time ever, the people behind Hollywood's big biceps and trim waistlines, reveal the secrets of what it takes to get in shape for the big screen. Top celebrity trainers from Gold's Gym, home to Hollywood's biggest stars, give us a "sneak peek" of Hollywood's latest fitness trends and how these can work for you. Gold's Gym's Achieving Balance trainer Mike Ryan, who has worked with Mark Wahlberg and The Rock, says it's all about balance: A healthy combination of cardio exercises, resistance training and diet. Ryan prefers that his clients workout for at least 40 minutes with 20-minute focus on cardio and a 20-minute resistance training session each day, or at the very least 3 to 4 times a week. "If you don't have the time for 40 minutes of exercise a day, do your best to do whatever you can. Every little bit helps.", says Ryan.

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2 RAISING HELEN 12:10 FS/ 12:40 MF/ 3:15 MF/ 5:20 END

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EXORCIST MTRCB Rating: R 13
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SM City Lucena Cinema 1
SM City Dasmariñas Cinema 4
SM City Iloilo Cinema 3
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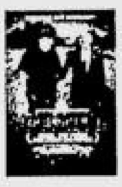
SM City Marilao Cinema 4



FAHRENHEIT 9/11 MTRCB Rating: PG 13
SM City Manila Cinema 11
SM City North Edsa Cinema 5
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MTRCB Rating: PG13 FENG SHUI
SM City Davao Cinema 3
SM Supercenter Sucat Cinema 4
SM City Cebu Cinema 7
SM City Lucena Cinema 4
SM City Dasmariñas Cinema 1
SM City Marilao Cinema 3
SM City Fairview Cinema 6
SM City Pampanga Cinema 6
SM Tutuban Cinema 3
SM Iloilo Cinema 6
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RAISING HELEN MTRCB Rating: GP
SM City Manila Cinema 2
SM North Edsa Cinema 2
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 7
SM Southmall Cinema 4
SM City Fairview Cinema 8
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SM Megamall Cinema 9
SM Bacoor Cinema 2

MTRCB Rating: R13 RESIDENT EVIL
SM City Supercenter Sucat Cinema 3
SM City Cebu Cinema 8
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SM City Fairview Cinema 4
SM City Tutuban Cinema 1
SM City Davao Cinema 1
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 3
SM City Southmall Cinema 3
SM Bacoor Cinema 5
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SM Megamall Cinema 10

SECRET WINDOW MTRCB Rating: R13
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SM City North Edsa Cinema 6
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 9
SM City Southmall Cinema 1
SM City Tutuban Cinema 2
SM Sucat Cinema 2
SM Megamall Cinema 5
SM City Fairview Cinema 4

MTRCB Rating: GP THE TERMINAL
SM City Fairview Cinema 12
SM City Davao Cinema 5
SM City Lucena Cinema 3
SM City Marilao Cinema 2
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 4
SM City Southmall Cinema 5
SM Bacoor Cinema 8
SM City Manila Cinema 10
SM City North Edsa Cinema 4
SM Megamall Cinema 8

SM City Pampanga Cinema 4
MTRCB Rating: PG 13 13 GOING ON 30
SM City Baguio Cinema 1
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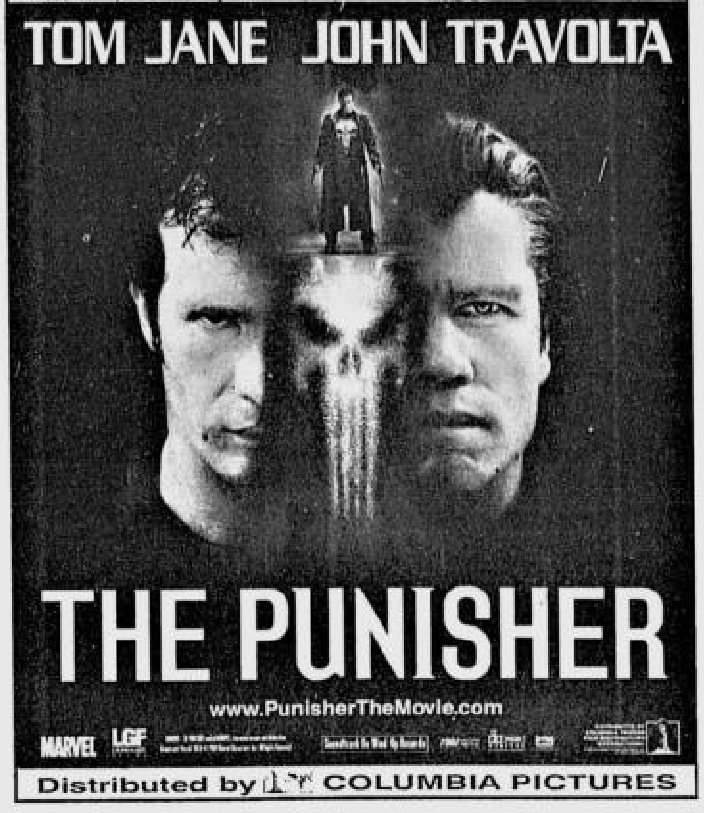

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Ungainly combination

From page A35

Kuh Ledesma

POP DIVA **Kuh Ledesma** is marking her 25th year in show biz with a major concert, an inspirational album, a techno compilation, edgy music videos, a Greatest Hits album, and a book of photos. Clearly, the lady is not about to rest on her many laurels, and is looking forward to more challenges to come.

Blanchard Ryan

PRIOR to her landing the plum role of Susan in "Open Water," **Blanchard Ryan** had starred in independent films like "My Sister's Wedding," "Remembering Sex" and "Exceed," and appeared in Fox Searchlight's "Broken Lizard's Super Troopers" and Kevin Smith's "Big Helium Dog." She also had stints on "Sex and the City."

"Open Water" has given Blanchard's career a big boost. In the film, which opens here on Oct. 6, she and **Daniel Travis** play scuba divers who suddenly discover that they have to face the dangers of the deep all by their lonesome.

MARK Bautista

Mark Bautista rising

MARK Bautista has indeed come a long way from singing in small bars in his native Cagayan de Oro. Last Sept. 18, he performed in a concert in New York and, on Sept. 24, in another one in San Francisco.

It was Mark's first time to leave the country. He went with Vic del Rosario, Viva's big boss, and was not accompanied by a personal assistant.

For almost two weeks, Mark and the rest of the cast and the crew of the concert, "Night of the Champions," played in several places on the East Coast and the West Coast.

The "Night of the Champions" also has young singing sensations Sarah Geronimo, Rachelle Anne Go and Christian Bautista.

Mark's star began to rise dramatically after he placed first runner-up in the talent search "Star for a Night." He is also Sarah's leading man in the TV series "Sarah: The Teen Princess." Mark and Sarah are starring in "Lastikman," Viva Films' entry in the Metro manila Film Festival in December.

Mark confesses that when he was starting as a singer, his dream was to have his own album. "I just wanted to make it as a professional singer," he says. "I never dreamed of starring in television or the movies. But God opened a door for me."

He has another reason for wanting to make it as a singer. His father, a seaman, has a heart problem and Mark sees to it that he gets all the medical attention he needs.

His father doesn't have to worry about anything any more. "I've taken care of things," says Mark.

Together in 1 show for the first time

SHOW TIME

EXPECT Basil Valdez to sing "Ngayon at Kailanman," "Hanggang sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," "Paano Bang Mangarap?," "Gaano Kadalas ang Minsan?" and his other hits.

Rico J. Puno will once more bring the audience to Luneta through his "The Way We Were," "Kapalaran," "Ganyan Pala ang Magmahal," "Damdamin" and others.

The audience at the Araneta Coliseum on Friday, Oct. 8, will have added treats from the iconic artists. Basil will sing a rousing "Macho Guwapito," a Rico J original, and Rico J himself promises a dramatic "Tuwing Umuulan," a Basil hit.

Together, Basil and Rico J will do the jazzy oldies recently revived by Michael Bublé plus hits by Maroon5, Simple Plan, Hoobastank and other current favorites.

Best of all, they will once more pick up the guitar to recall their teenage years as

TOGETHER/ A38

BLENDING. Serious-type Basil Valdez (far left) and funny all-around Rico J. Puno

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3	Dolby	RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
4	SDDS	FENG SHUI	11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
5	dts	BOURNE SUPREMACY	12:00 pm 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
6	Dolby	KRISANTA IBA KA	11:55 am 2:05 pm 4:15 pm 6:25 pm 8:35 pm
7	Dolby	SECRET WINDOW	12:00 pm 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Oct 6	GINEBRA vs PUREFOODS 7:20 pm
Oct 8	BASIL VALDEZ & RICO PUNO CONCERT
Oct 9	ALICIA KEYS 2004 WORLD TOUR
Oct 10	GINEBRA vs STA LUCIA 6:30 pm
Oct 13	SAN MIGUEL vs GINEBRA 7:20 pm
Oct 16	JASMINE TRIAS CONCERT
Dec 11	JULIO IGLESIAS CONCERT
Dec 25	DISNEY ON ICE : Princess Classics

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KRISANTA IBA KA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	TAKAW TINGIN
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	RAISING HELEN/FAHRENHEIT 9/11/SECRET WINDOW/RESIDENT EVIL 2
PREMIERE THEATRE	BOURNE SUPREMACY

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SAVED
CINEMA-2	KRISANTA IBA KA
CINEMA-3	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HEAVEN'S POND
CINEMA-6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
CINEMA-7	KAPAG PALAY NAGING BIGAS (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-8	DON'T TEMPT ME (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	RAISING HELEN
CINEMA-12	SECRET WINDOW
CINEMA-14	BOURNE SUPREMACY
CINEMA-15	FENG SHUI

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-1	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-2	DODGEBALL
CINEMA-4	TERMINAL

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 RAISING HELEN
FS : 10:40 AM, 1:15 PM, 3:50 PM, 6:25 PM
LMF : 9:00 PM (GP)

2 RESIDENT EVIL 2
FS : 11:40 AM, 1:55 PM, 4:10 PM, 6:25 PM
LMF : 8:40 PM (R-13)

3 SECRET WINDOW
FS : 11:55 AM, 2:10 PM, 4:25 PM, 6:40 PM
LMF : 9:00 PM (R-13)

4 BOURNE SUPREMACY
FS 11:45 AM, 2:00 PM, LMF : 4:15 PM
(PG-13)
ADVANCE SNEAK PREVIEW
HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
(PG - 13) 6:35 pm & 9:00 PM

PREMIERE THEATRE
FAHRENHEIT 9/11
FS : 10:30 AM, 1:05 PM, 3:40 PM, 6:15PM, LMF : 9 PM
(PG - 13)

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CINEMA 1
RAISING HELEN
11:50, 2:30, 5:05, 7:40, 10:15
GP

CINEMA 2
RESIDENT EVIL 2
11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15
R13

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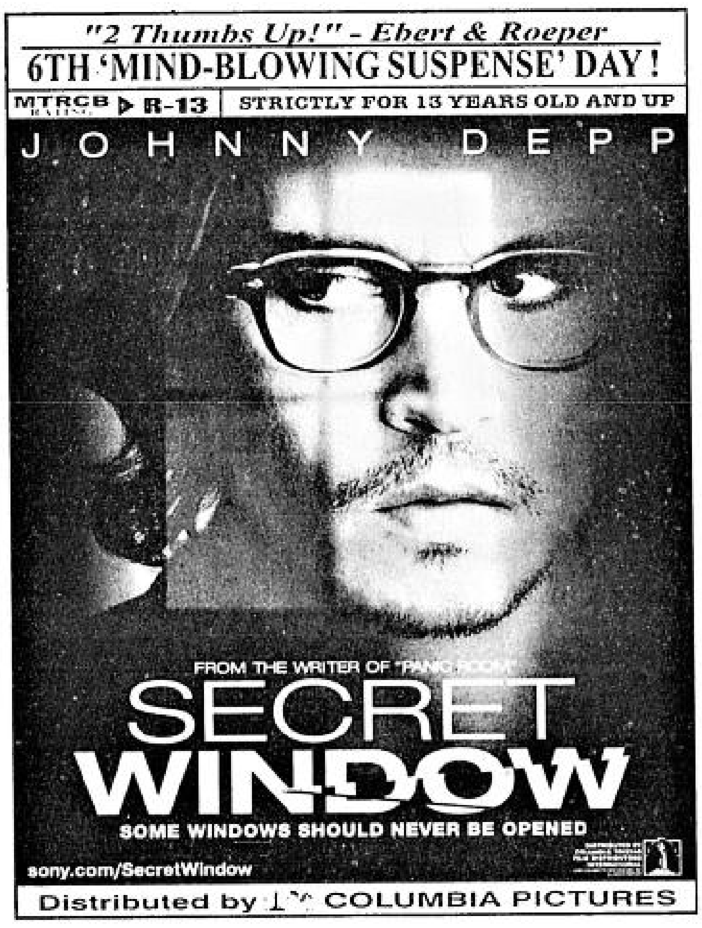
MUSIC MUSEUM

October 2-3 & 15-16	ALL ABOUT MEN (PENIS TALKS)	8:30PM
October 8 & 9	OGIE ALCASID	9:00PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635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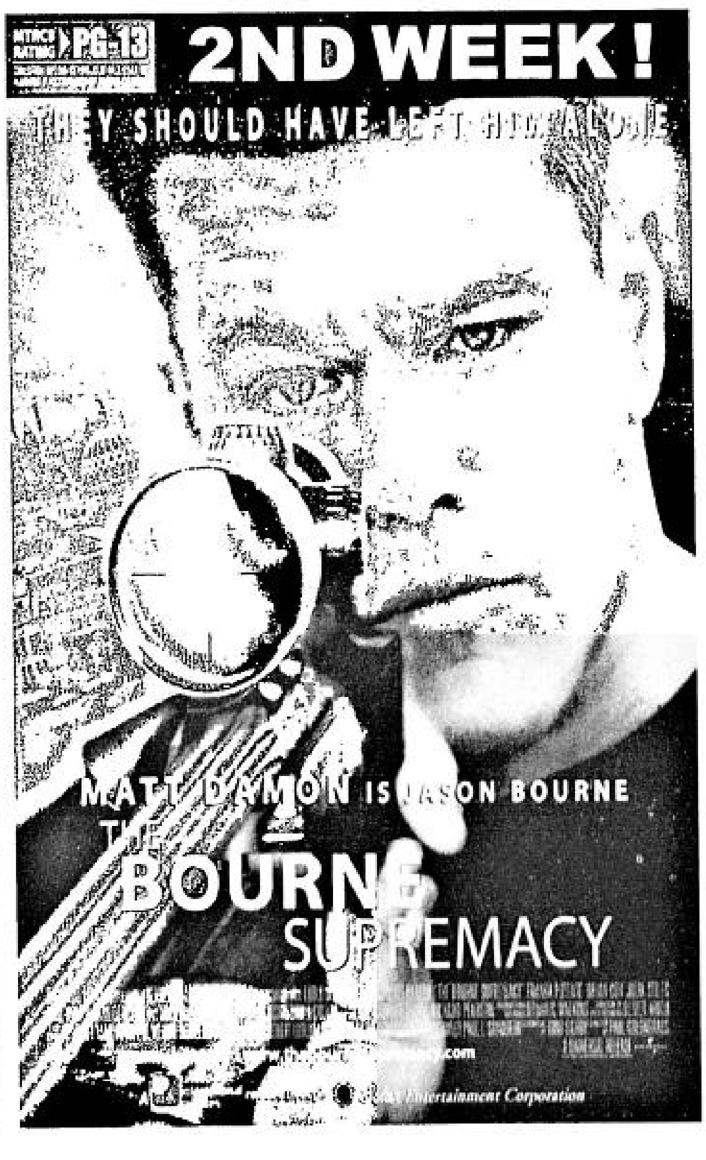
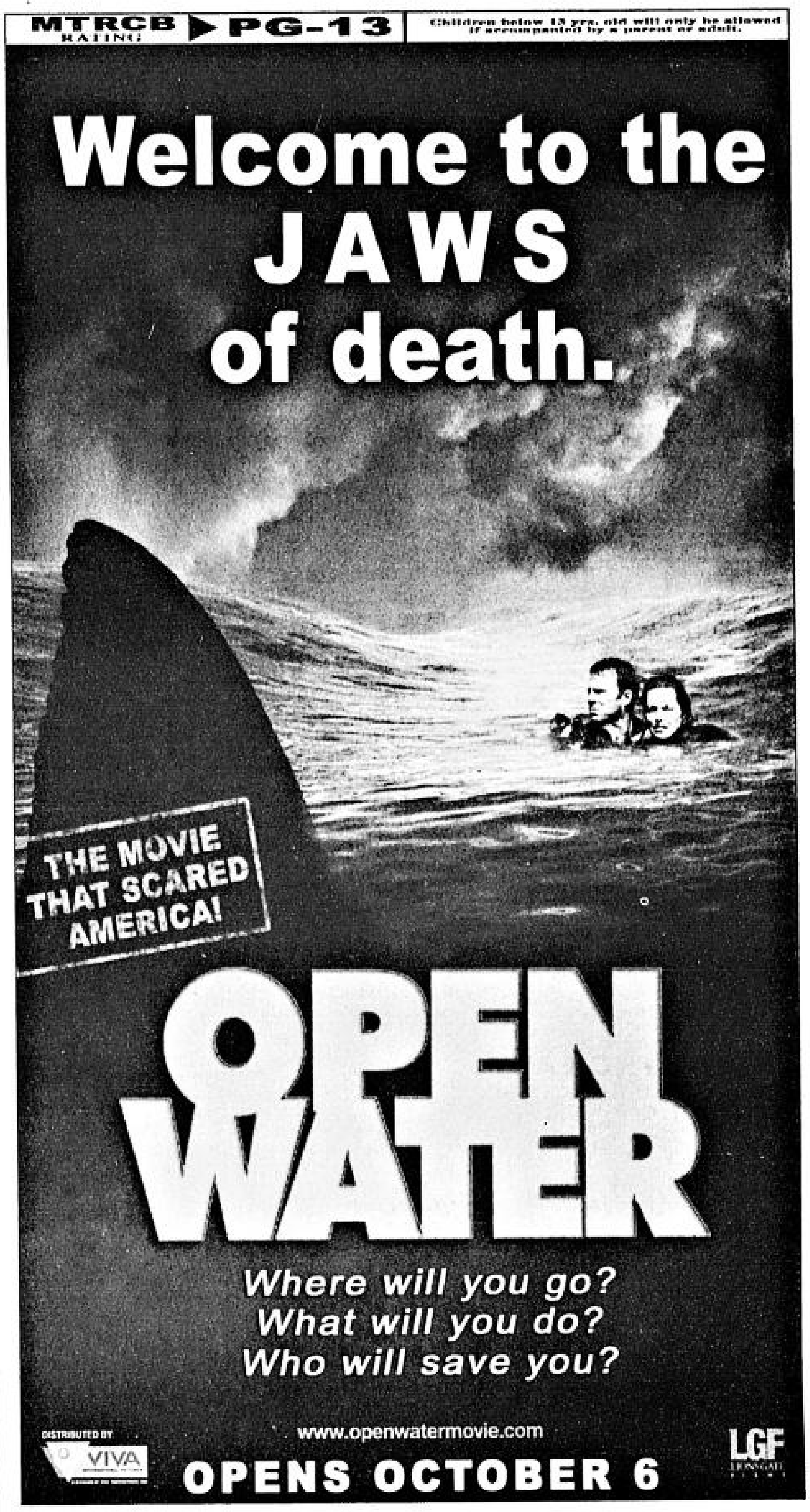

MTRCB RATING PG-13
2ND WEEK!
THEY SHOULD HAVE LEFT HIM ALONE
MATT DAMON IS JASON BOURNE
THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
Entertainment Corporation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PAUL BETTANY
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GALLERIA 632-9115 to 16
CINEMA 1 THX RESIDENT EVIL 2 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30
2 RAISING HELEN 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
3 FENG SHUI 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
4 SECRET WINDOW 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
5 RESIDENT EVIL 2 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
6 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
8 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
10 THE NOTEBOOK 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
Regular Price: P150 THX / P100/70 for two levels cinemas / P100 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 RESIDENT EVIL 2 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
2 RAISING HELEN 10:10, 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:00
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 11:05, 1:05, 3:45, 6:05, 8:20, 10:00
4 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
5 FENG SHUI 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
6 SECRET WINDOW 10:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:00
7 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 10:10, 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280
1 RAISING HELEN 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
2 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING 11:20, 1:40, 6:30, 9:00
3 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
4 THE TERMINAL 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
5 RESIDENT EVIL 2 11:30, 1:55, 4:20, 6:45, 9:10
6 SECRET WINDOW 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
7 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 10:30
8 FENG SHUI 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229 / 31
1 RESIDENT EVIL 2
2 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
6 SECRET WINDOW
7 RAISING HELEN
8 SAVED

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985/2575
1 BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
2 FENG SHUI
3 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview
4 KRISANTA...IBA KA

CAINTA 240-4061
1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 FENG SHUI
3 RAISING HELEN
4 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview

LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870
1 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 SAVED
3 JANDARA
4 FENG SHUI
5 MINDHUNTERS

STA. ROSA (049)837-0907
1 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
2 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
3 TAKAW TINGIN
4 MINDHUNTERS
5 FENG SHUI

DASMARIÑAS 852-2125 / 416-4332
1 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 TAKAW TINGIN
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 SAVED
5 FENG SHUI

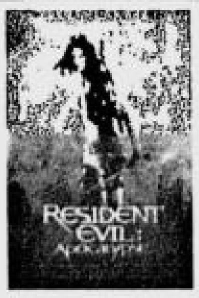
ANGELES
1 DODGEBALL
2 13 GOING ON 30
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

STARMILLS San Fernando, Pampanga 875-1927 / 961-5270
1 DODGEBALL
2 TAKAW TINGIN
3 FENG SHUI
4 THE NOTEBOOK
5 13 GOING ON 30
6 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

IMUS 471-8188 / 875-5858
1 HEAVEN'S POND
2 RAISING HELEN
3 KRISANTA...IBA KA
4 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
5 FENG SHUI
6 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS Sneak Preview

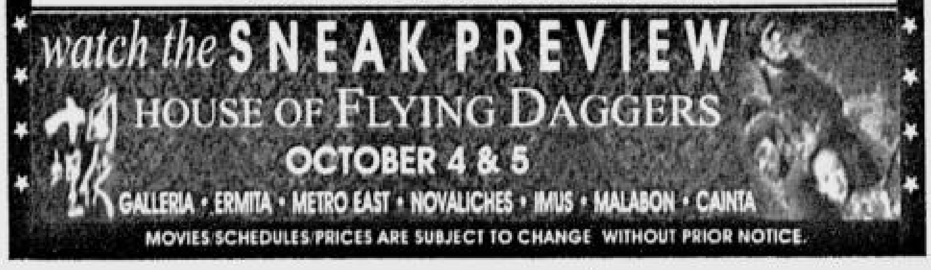
BACOLOD 441-0458/59
1 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
2 TAG-INIT
3 THE TERMINAL
4 DODGEBALL
5 JANDARA
6 MINDHUNTERS

ILOILO 336-8070/78
1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
2 FENG SHUI
3 THE TERMINAL
4 THE TOOL BOX MURDERS
5 TAG-INIT
6 THE NOTEBOOK



SECRET WINDOW

at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD



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HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
THX 1 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
2 RAISING HELEN
3 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
4 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
5 SECRET WINDOW

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
2 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
3 RAISING HELEN
4 FENG SHUI

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 RAISING HELEN
2 FENG SHUI
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE BOURNE... 1 10, 3 30, 5 50, 8 10, 10 30
4 FAHRENHEIT 9/11
5 HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS
6 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
7 SECRET WINDOW

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL For inquiries, call 526-1448
2 RAISING HELEN 11:40, 2 10, 4 40, 7 10, 9 40

GB3 GREENBELT 3
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 RAISING HELEN 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11:20
GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE 2 35, 4 45, 6 55, 9 05, 11 15
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 2 00, 4 30, 7 00, 9 30
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 SECRET WINDOW 1 05, 3 10, 5 15, 7 20, 9 25, 11 30
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY 2 10, 4 30, 6 50, 9 10, 11 30

ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
2 13 GOING ON 30
3 DODGEBALL
4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY
5 FENG SHUI

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
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NICOLE JOY

Pop Center introduces new singer

THE CENTER for Pop Music Philippines will introduce a new singing talent, Nicole Joy, in a show called "A New Journey" on Oct. 12 at 9 p.m. at Dish.

Nyoy Volante and Christian Bautista are the guest artists. The show coincides with the 16th birthday of Nicole Joy, who was discovered by composer, arranger and record producer Sunny Ilacad in an audition for multiplex singers.

Nicole Joy will be singing songs from her album, including Nyoy Volante's composition "Maghihintay." The album was produced by Ilacad's wife Sherbert, who now acts as her manager.

Nicole Joy trained at the Center for Pop Music Philippines Inc. and was personally supervised by its founder and president, Butch Albarracin. After her training, she became a multiplex singer.

Among the other products of Center for Pop Music Philippines are Sarah Geronimo, Erik Santos, Rachelle Ann Go, Frenchy Dy, Sandara Park, Nina, Nyoy Volante, King, Josh Santana, Roselle Nava, Dessa, Geneva Cruz and many others.

Dish is at the, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Complex, Mother Ignacia Street, Quezon City.

Together in 1...

From page A37

struggling folk singers.

All in all, the Viva Concerts show, "The Way We Were," will be a memorable evening of great music as Basil and Rico J perform together for the first time on stage.

Although both rose to fame during the '70s, they have never sang together in one show in the past 30 years. It is generally believed that this is because of their contrasting styles. Rico is considered an all-around entertainer who is also a natural comedian. Basil is the serious type who is famous for his inspirational recordings.

"The Way We Were" is another project of Viva Cocerts in cooperation with Smart Gold and media partners The Philippine Star, People's Tonight and Myx. It is directed by Al Quinn with Mel Villena as musical director.

Tickets are P1,500, P1,200, P1,000, P450, P250, and P150. They are available at all SM Ticketnet outlets and the Araneta Coliseum. Call 911-5555 for inquiries.

You haven't heard me sing these songs before, says 'Singer' Ogie

ONE of the season's most anticipated musical events is Ogie Alcasid's Music Museum concert, "Ogie Alcasid . . . I Am a Singer," on Oct. 8 and 9.

The concert features new offerings in Ogie's repertoire, arranged by musical director Archie Castillo.

"They haven't heard me sing these songs before," guarantees Ogie. "I want to treat people to something new, something different from what they've heard in my previous concerts."

The concert repertoire includes hits originally sung by Hajji Alejandro, Rico J. Puno, Ryan Cayabyab, Marco Sison, Basil Valdez, Nonoy Zuñiga, Rey Valera, Ric Segreto and many others. Ogie will also sing Fra Lippo Lippi, Barry Manilow, and other favorites.

"It will be a surprise, it will be fun," the singer promises.

Simultaneous with "Ogie Alcasid...I Am A Singer" is the launching of the singer-composer's album which is also called "Ogie Alcasid... I Am a Singer," from Viva Records.

Ogie's official website, which hasn't been updated for a long while, will also be relauched.

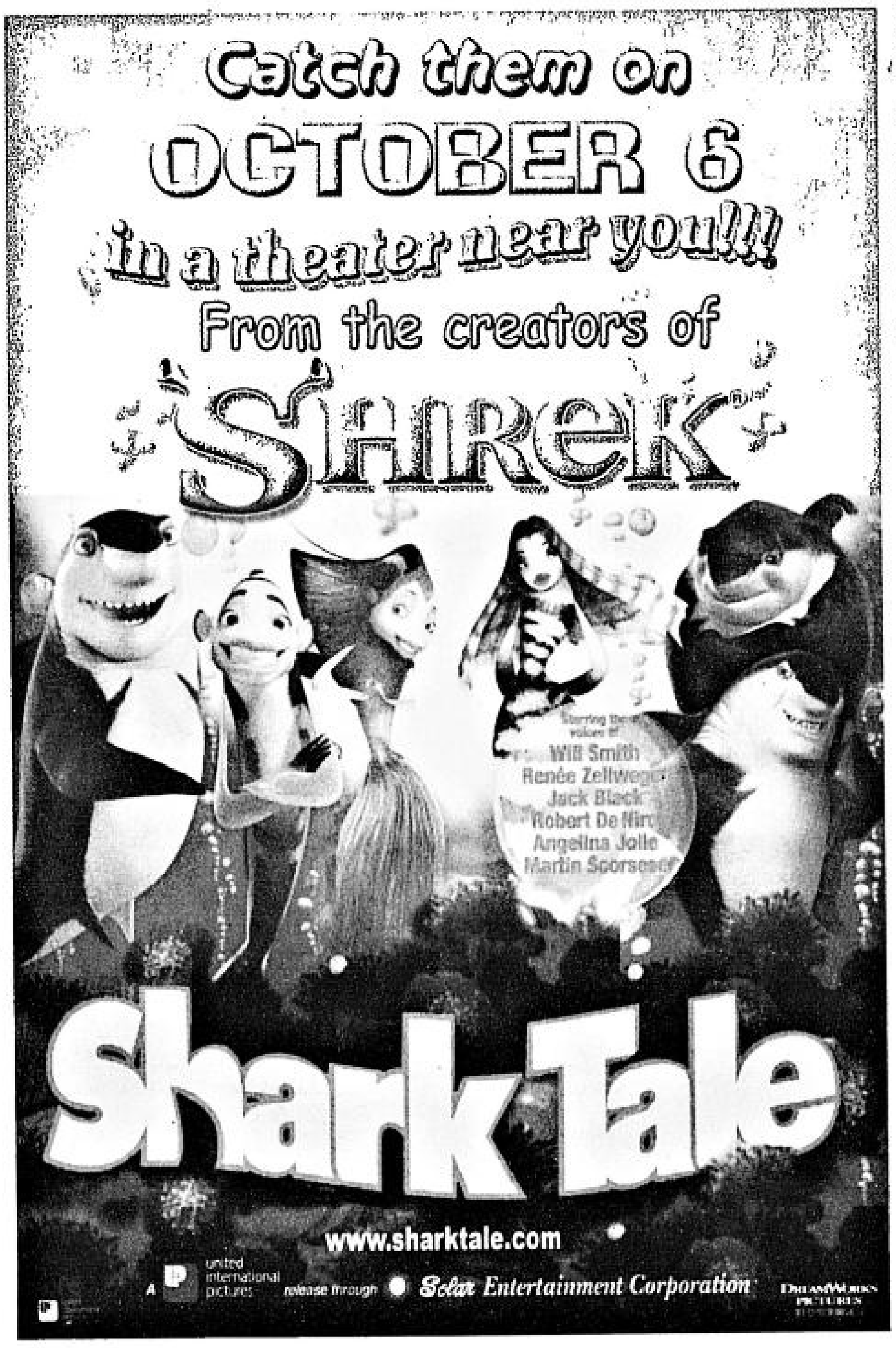
Ogie himself will direct the concert. Louie Ignacio directs for TV.

Ogie's guests will be Sheryn Regis on Oct. 8, Sarah Geronimo on Oct. 9, and Nyoy Volante with the Mannos on both nights.

Tickets are P1,500, P1,100 and P700 and are available at Ticketworld, 721-0635, and Music Museum, 891-5610.

SHOW TIME

OGIE Alcasid promises "something new"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1	BOURNE SUPREMACY	10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:20	PG-13
2	RESIDENT EVIL 2	10:30, 1:00, 3:20 5:45, 8:10, 11:00	R-13
3	SECRET WINDOW	10:45, 1:00, 3:15 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	R-13
4	RAISING HELEN	12:10, 2:55, 5:40 8:25, 11:10	GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS PG13 12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00	RAISING HELEN GP 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30	FAHRENHEIT 9/11 PG13 12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:05
RESIDENT EVIL 2 R13 12:35,2:55,5:15,7:35,10:10	SECRET WINDOW R13 1:10,3:20,5:30,7:40,10:00	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY PG13 12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20

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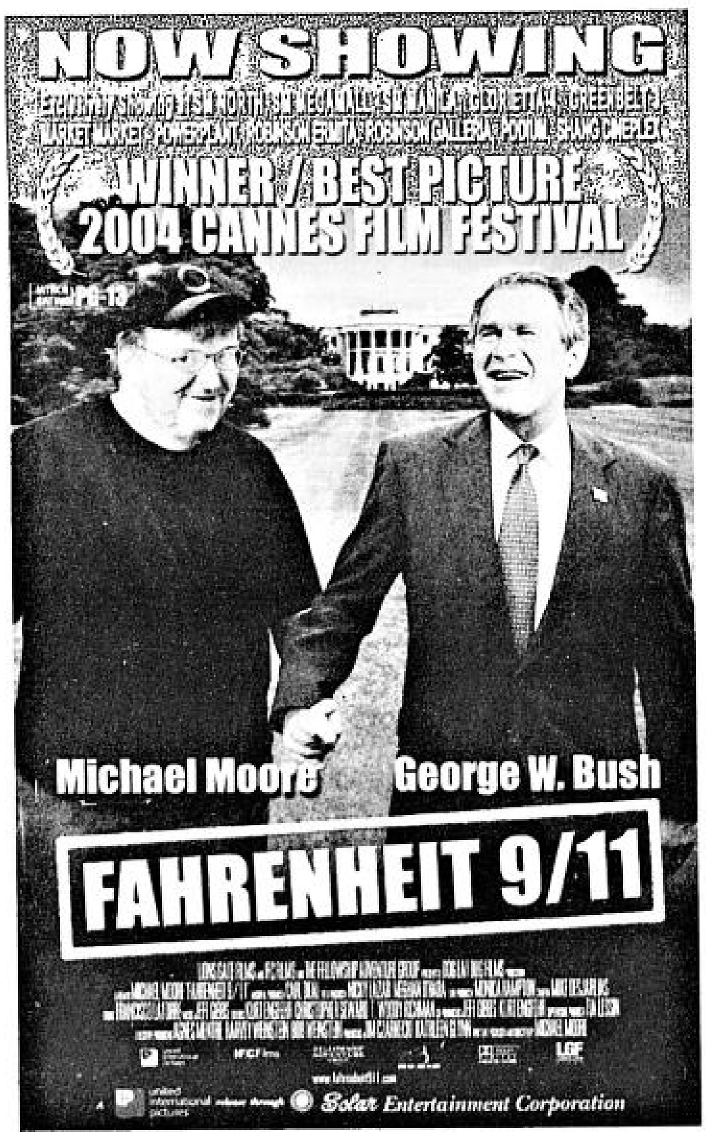
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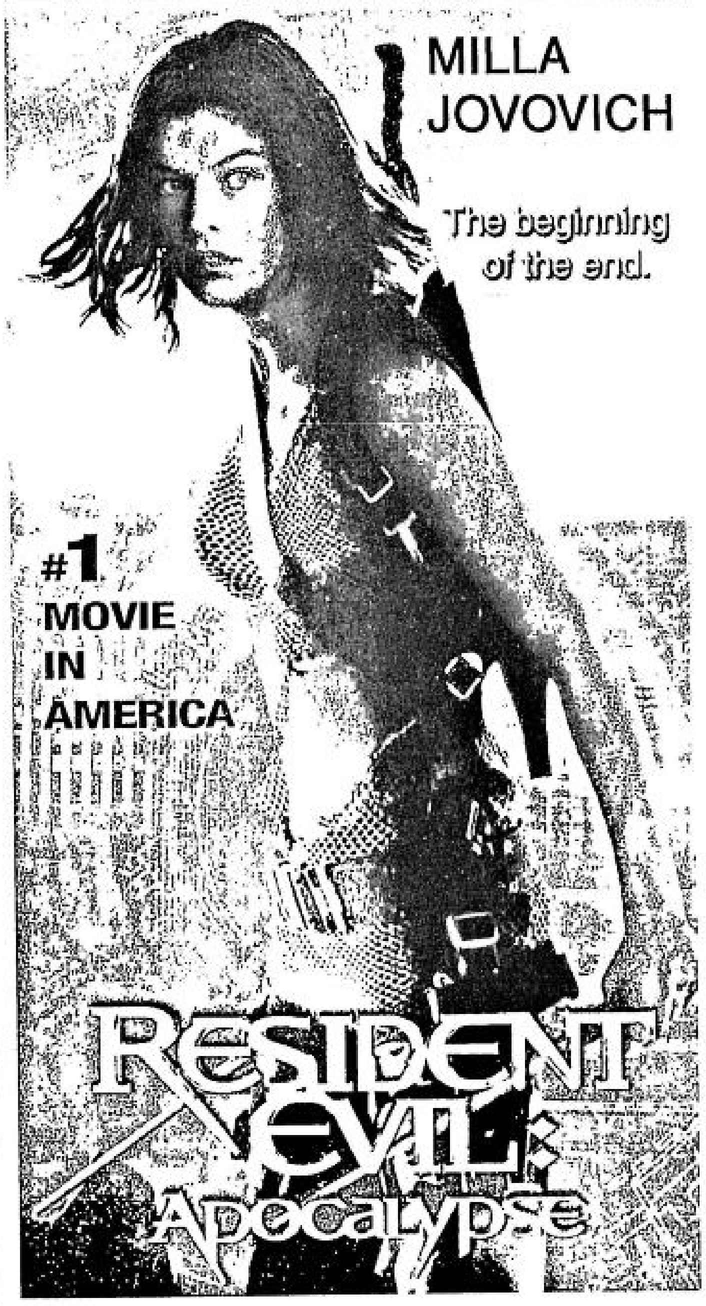
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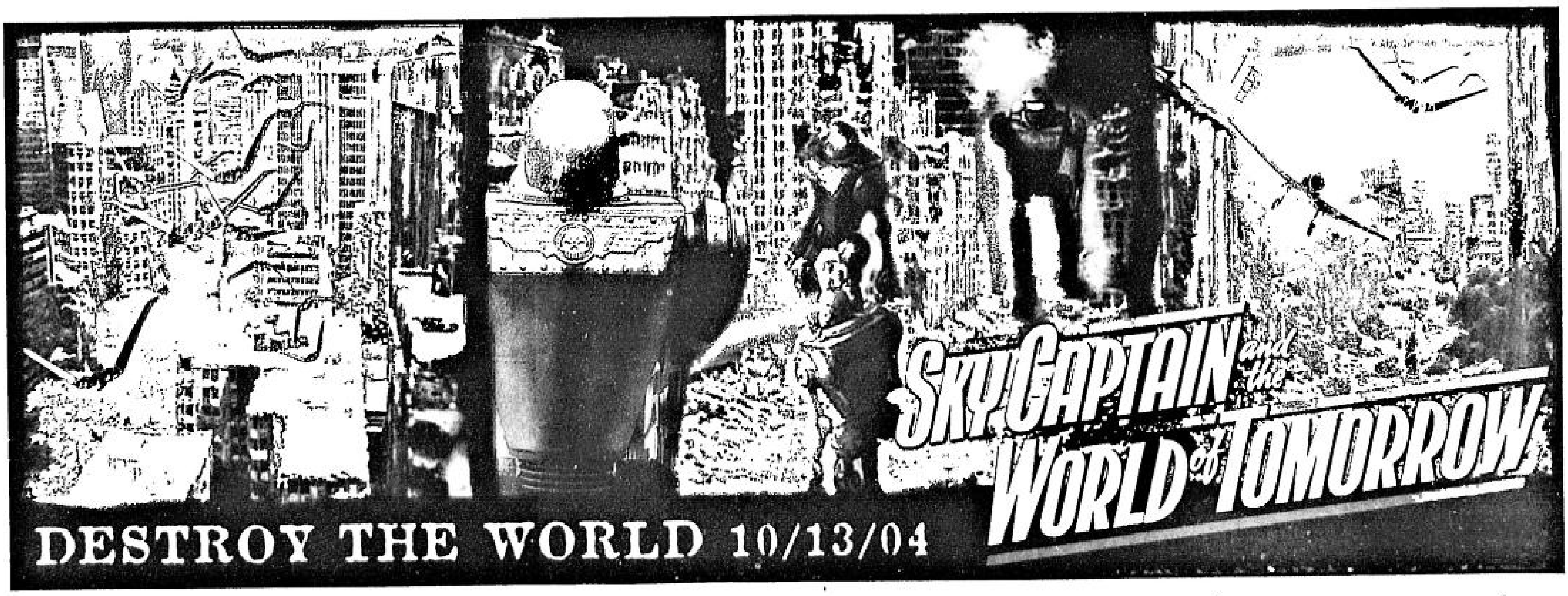
RESIDENT EVIL: Apocalypse


SKY CAPTAIN and the WORLD of TOMORROW
DESTROY THE WORLD 10/13/04

Commercials as great movies

By Nini Valera

ADBOARD'S Cerge Remonde (left) and PDI's Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (third from left) present TV ad awards to Jimenez Basic's Don Sevilla III (second from left) and Joey Melliza. PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO

THE CANNES Lion has remained elusive to the Filipino ad man.

A FILMMAKER once said the best movies are television commercials.

To this day, about two decades after I first came across the concept, the observation still applies to TV ads. Like movies, great TV commercials (TVCs) have a plausible story line, a plot twist, outstanding cinematography, a credible payoff, a hit song or jingle or musical score, a brilliant cast, a catchy slogan—all squeezed into 30 glorious seconds, 60 if client has tons of money to spend on exorbitant media buys. Which makes commercials harder to do than full-length movies, according to the same filmmaker.

Take this year's Grand Prix winner at the Cannes International Advertising Festival—"Mountain" for Sony Play Station 2.

A 60-seconder, the TVC opens with a long-haired man seated on the ledge of a building overlooking a city. With just the child star Shirley Temple singing "De Gospel Train/Get On Board Lil' Children" from the 1936 film "Temples" as musical score to a massive buildup of mountain of bodies, the ad ends with "fun, anyone?" and the the slogan "play the world on line."

Shot in a soccer stadium in Brazil using 500 extras, the ad also won for TBWA/London the Lion for excellence in music.

The 60-second spot was viewed last week along with other Cannes winners at Cinema 2 in Greenbelt in Makati City as part of the Cannes Lions in Manila, organized by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the official Cannes Festival representative, and the Advertising Board of the Philippines. The exhibit showcased 300 Lion winners from all over the globe.

Very tough job

The exhibit opening last Monday had French Ambassador Madam Renee Veyret as guest of honor, and industrialist Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II as keynote speaker. Hosts were Ces Drilon and Pinky Webb.

"Filipinos are among the most artistic people in the world," said PDI president and chief executive officer Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez in her welcome remarks at the opening.

A Filipino, however, has yet to win a Lion. The highest achievement so far by a local ad agency in Cannes is a bronze win for a direct marketing collateral by BCD Pinpoint. Three local advertising agencies, however, made it as finalists this year: BBDO Guerrero Ortega for its print and billboard work on FedEx, TBWA/Santiago Mangada Puno for Adidas print ads and billboards, and Jimenez/Basic for a Bench deodorant TVC.

"To ensnare a Lion in the vast jungle that is international advertising is, as we've all experienced, a very tough job," said Ms Romualdez. "But it can and will be done. Like you, our paper also strives to come up with innovations that lend themselves to the dynamic and creative nature of advertising. However, eight-page foldouts, scented ads, floating placements and the like have no impact without new ideas challenging them. We hope this five-day festival will also open more new doors of creative collaboration between advertisers and the media they use."

ZOBEL DE AYALA

Catching up

BBDO's David Guerrero is no stranger to that jungle. In 2001, he snared a Lion in Cannes as part of a regional creative team that worked on the FedEx account.

"I know what it's like to go up on stage, but I'd like to do it for an agency here as well," said Guerrero. "We want to do it now for our local client."

But more than winning, it's knowing what the benchmarks are for great advertising.

"Advertising people need to know what is the best work in the world," said Guerrero. "I think we will catch up very quickly. We have been behind a long time because we have been quite isolated in terms of foreign talents who come here to work, unlike in Singapore or Hong Kong where a lot of foreigners come to work. Not that they're better, but they bring a fresh perspective. A fresh perspective always helps."

Access to the annual Cannes Lion will be made easier next year as the Advertising Board of the Philippines will bankroll the trips of local admen to Cannes in France.

Beyond winning

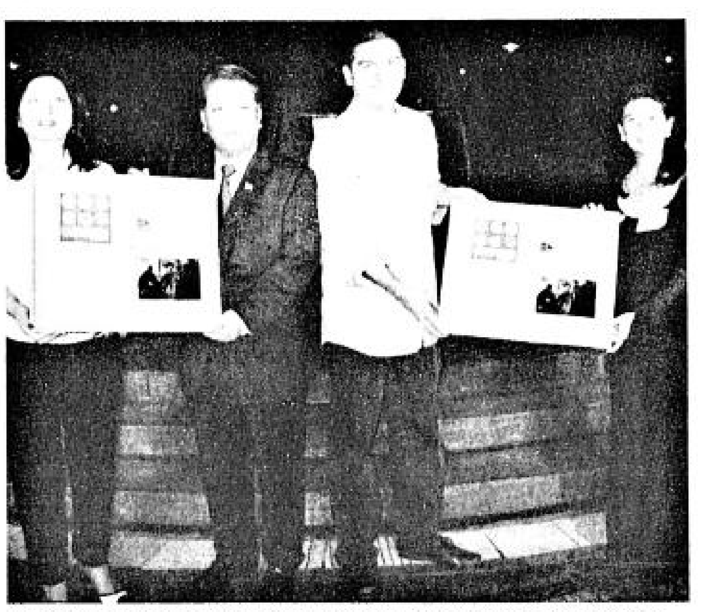
AdBoard Chair Cerge Remonde announced in his speech last Monday that the AdBoard had secured half a million pesos for next year's representatives. He said the AdBoard also allotted $2,000 for any local adman who wins a bronze, silver or gold in any category of the ad derby.

For TBWA's Tong Puno, being in Cannes for the advertising festival goes beyond winning.

"It's being aware of what goes on," Puno said. "I think it's more of an education for our creative people. Being exposed to this kind of competition will lead to a learning curve about benchmarking our work against the rest of the world. We haven't been doing that so we think we're doing okay."

What would it take to win a Lion in Cannes?

"I guess you just have to push and push until you make it," said Evans Sator, who art-directed the Adidas ads. "You just have to keep on trying."



PRINT winnners, BBDO's Susan Dimacali, David Guerrero, receive award from Remonde and Sandy Prieto-Romualdez.

Salma Hayek to star in 'Betty La Fea' for US TV

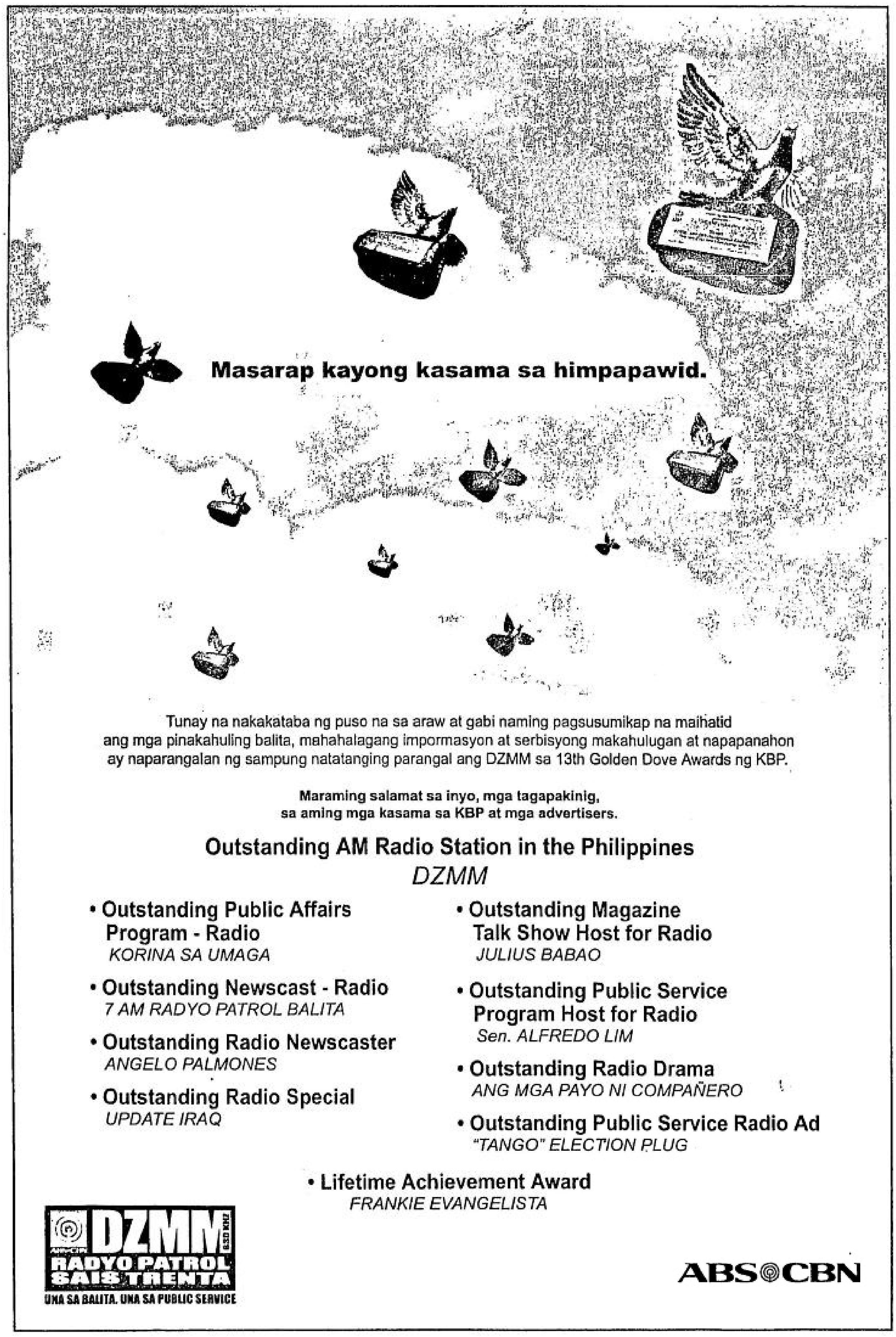
LOS ANGELES—Mexican bombshell Salma Hayek has teamed up with a US television producer to adapt the popular Colombian soap opera "Betty la Fea" for US TV, a Hollywood trade publication reported Wednesday.

The "telenovela" would be broadcast on ABC television, said Variety.

The Oscar-nominated actress has partnered with producer Ben Silverman, who owns the rights to "Ugly Betty," to bring an hour-long version of the show to the US, the magazine said.

The telenovela was hugely popular across Latin America, making its lead actress, Ana Maria Orozco, a star on the continent and in Spain. "Betty la Fea" is the story of a short-on-looks but effective secretary who falls in love with her boss, who heads a fashion design company.

Hayek, 38, starred in a telenovela in her native Mexico when she was 22. She starred in the action flicks "Desperado" and "Wild Wild West." Her role as the eccentric Mexican painter Frida Kahlo in the film "Frida" earned her a best actress nomination at the 2003 Oscars. AFP



Masarap kayong kasama sa himpapawid.

Tunay na nakakataba ng puso na sa araw at gabi naming pagsusumikap na maihatid
ang mga pinakahuling balita, mahahalagang impormasyon at serbisyong makahulugan at napapanahon
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  JULIUS BABAO
- **Outstanding Public Service Program Host for Radio**
  Sen. ALFREDO LIM
- **Outstanding Radio Drama**
  ANG MGA PAYO NI COMPAÑERO
- **Outstanding Public Service Radio Ad**
  "TANGO" ELECTION PLUG
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BSP survey: Consumer confidence weak

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL consumer confidence was weak from July to September due to worries over shrinking household earnings, but would likely pick up over the next 12 months starting the fourth quarter of this year, a new Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas survey showed.

The BSP, which conducted its very first consumer expectations survey (CES) in the first week of July, collaborated with the National Statistics Office to complement its quarterly business expectations survey. The new CES survey was based on three components: family financial situation, level of family income, and economic conditions of the country.

Based on the third quarter survey, half of the sample households in the National Capital Region rated their present economic situation as "worse," 40.5 percent "stable" and only 9.5 percent "better" compared to a year ago. This resulted in a negative 40.5-percent diffusion index (DI), computed as a share of households that answered in the affirmative less the share of those who replied in the negative for a given indicator.

A negative DI indicates an unfavorable view, except for unemployment, interest rate and inflation rate where a negative DI indicates the opposite.

Respondents expected their family income to decline by an average of 4.3 percent compared to a year ago.

The major concerns of respondents with negative expectations during the third quarter were the lack of work or permanent work, decreasing income, low salary, high cost of living, personal indebtedness, and graft and corruption in the government.

On the other hand, those with positive expectations during the quarter anticipated increases in domestic and overseas income, wages, employment and savings.

"With the expected decline in income in the third quarter of 2004, respondents were cautious in purchasing assets during the period," BSP Officer-in-Charge Armando Suratos said in a statement.

Based on the buying conditions index, he noted that only three out of 10 sample households thought it was a good time to buy assets like a house and/or lot, consumer durables and motor vehicles.

Anticipating a moderate rise in income in the next 12 months, Suratos said respondents would remain prudent in their decision to buy assets.

About two out of 10 households either intended or were undecided whether to buy a house and/or lot, consumer durable or motor vehicle in the next 12 months. More respondents intended to buy consumer durables than house and/or lot or motor vehicles.

Those who thought favorably about buying conditions and intentions regarded prices of the assets as reasonable with good installment terms. In addition, 67 percent of those who planned to buy motor vehicles intended to use them for business while 33 percent would use them as service vehicles for their families.

On the other hand, respondents who considered it a bad time to buy any of these assets said they had "no money, no savings, assets have high prices, and basic needs like food and education are their priorities."

From a negative 40.5-percent DI in the third quarter, consumer expectations for the fourth quarter showed an improvement at negative 8.1 percent as one component of the index, level of family income, turned positive compared to the third quarter where all three components registered negative indices.

For the fourth quarter, family income was estimated to rise by an average of 0.8 percent, increasing further to an average of 3.9 percent a year ahead. This was a reversal of the slowdown expected in the third quarter.

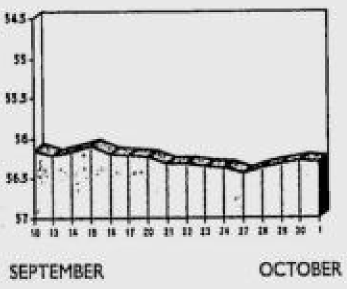
With the expected improve-

BSP/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.30= $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 1, 2004

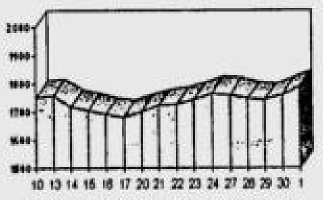
Y 110.39 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 1, 2004

GOLD: $411.20-411.70
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 30, 2004

October 1, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.803923	1.000000	56.2760
Japan	Yen	0.007309	0.009092	0.5117
United Kingdom	Pound	1.47030	1.812400	101.9946
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.103095	0.128240	7.2168
Switzerland	Franc	0.645462	0.802890	45.1834
Canada	Dollar	0.637377	0.792833	44.6175
Singapore	Dollar	0.477389	0.593824	33.4180
Australia	Dollar	0.581710	0.723589	40.7027
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.132536	2.652661	149.2812
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.214374	0.266660	15.0066
Brunei	Dollar	0.475976	0.592066	33.3191
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019423	0.024160	1.3596
UAE	Dirham	0.218879	0.272264	15.3219
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.243900	70.0017
Argentina	Peso	0.269999	0.335852	18.9004
Brazil	Real	0.281486	0.350140	19.7045
Denmark	Kroner	0.134370	0.167143	9.4061
India	Rupee	0.017526	0.021801	1.2269
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.211564	0.263165	14.8099
Mexico	New Peso	0.070659	0.087893	4.9463
New Zealand	Dollar	0.542824	0.675219	37.9986
Norway	Kroner	0.119805	0.149025	8.3865
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013596	0.016912	0.9517
South Africa	Rand	0.124183	0.154471	8.6930
Korea	Won	0.000699	0.000869	0.0489
Sweden	Kroner	0.110482	0.137429	7.7340
Syria	Pound	0.015549	0.019342	1.0885
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023666	0.029438	1.6567
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000420	0.000522	0.0294

STOCK MARKET

Bullish sentiment seen to continue



(See stock market report on Page B6)

ANALYSTS still see a bullish stock market in the coming weeks, boosted by prospects of better corporate earnings and the expected passage of tax reform measures to help plug the government's budget shortfall.

Despite some profit-taking early last week, the composite index managed to break record highs, surging 24 points or 1.36 percent to 1787.25. This was the market's highest close since April 10, 2000.

"The market opened weaker due to some profit taking after the late rally (the previous) week. In the first three days of the trading week, we lost 21 points but this was recovered in the last two sessions (where the Phisix gained 45 points) due to bargain hunting and foreign buying," BPI Trade said in its weekly report.

Credit Lyonnais head of research Alfred Dy expects the market to re

BULLISH/ B6

P2-B GOV'T LOANS

LRTA debt conversion set

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government intends to convert into equity some P2 billion in accumulated loans to the heavily losing Light Rail Transit Authority, believing the move was practical considering the uncertainty of whether the LRTA could still afford to repay the borrowings.

Finance Undersecretary Nieves Osorio said the DOF would revive its old proposal to Congress to increase the authorized capital of the LRTA so that the national government could place more equity into the mass transport agency.

As of December 2003, LRTA's authorized capital stood at P3 billion. The national government's advances to the agency have already reached P1.9 billion as of Aug. 31 this year. Advances cover the amount of matured borrowings of a state-owned company that the national government agrees to shoulder and collect later from the company.

LRT coaches

Osorio said the DOF had been pushing for a bill that would increase the authorized capital of the LRTA several years ago, but Congress

LRTA/ B2

Gov't eyes VAT on bus, jeepney operators

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is considering placing the public-transport industry—including jeepney and bus operators—under the value-added tax system to complement moves to impose VAT on petroleum products.

According to Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan, the DOF was studying the possibility of imposing VAT, to replace the current percentage tax, on public transport utilities to allow them to use the input-output tax mechanism under the VAT system.

Since the imposition of VAT on petroleum products will increase their operating cost, public transport operators could be allowed to partly or fully recover the additional expense to be caused by the 10-percent VAT on petroleum through the tax system's input-output mechanism.

Under this scheme, a business owner is allowed to declare as input credits the amount of VAT he or she paid for materials necessary

GOV'T/ B10

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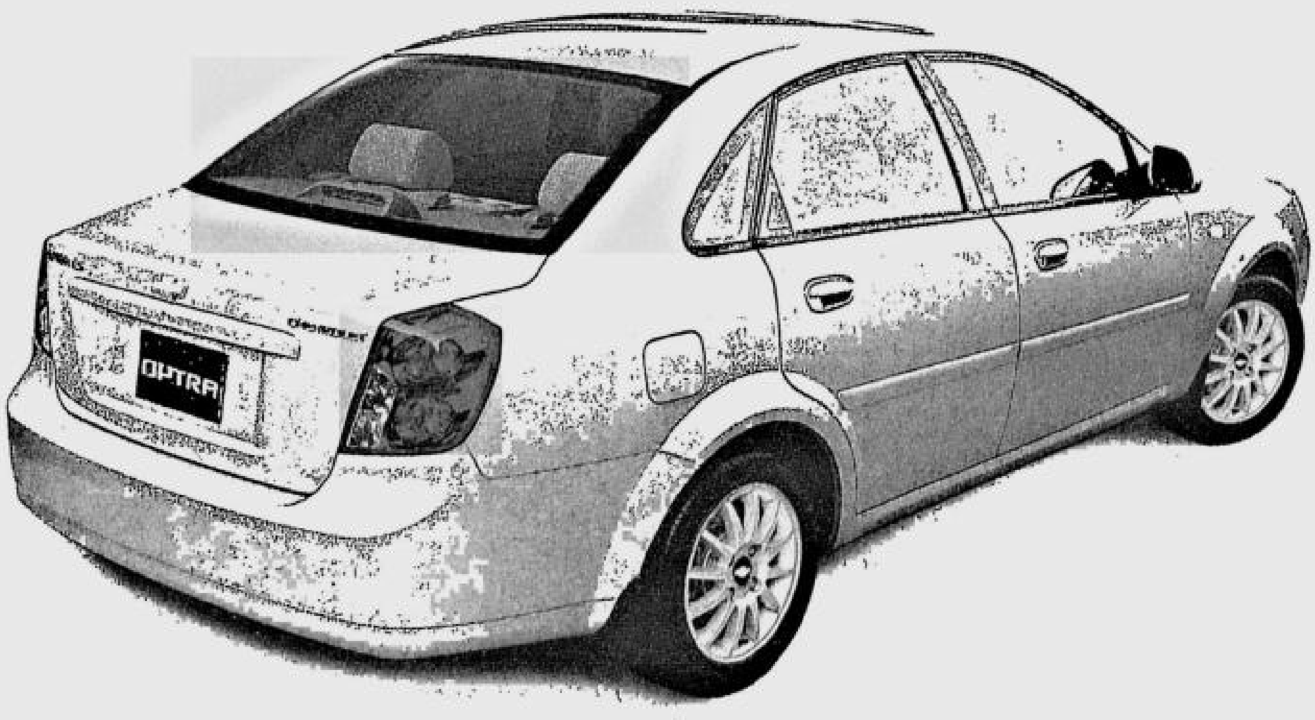

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1839 Series of 2004

Chevrolet Optra 1.6 LS M/T

SRP P670,000

%DP	DP	MONTHS TO PAY 12	18	24	36	48	60
15%	100,500	49,067	33,601	26,672	19,159	15,412	13,208
20%	134,000	46,078	31,553	25,047	17,992	14,473	12,403
25%	167,500	43,089	29,505	23,423	16,825	13,535	11,599
30%	201,000	40,100	27,457	21,799	15,658	12,597	10,793
35%	234,500	37,108	25,409	20,175	14,491	11,658	9,988
40%	268,000	34,118	23,361	18,549	13,325	10,719	9,184
45%	301,500	31,128	21,314	16,925	12,158	9,781	8,378
50%	335,000	27,916	19,266	15,301	10,992	8,842	7,574

Chevrolet Optra 1.6 LS A/T

SRP P710,000

%DP	DP	MONTHS TO PAY 12	18	24	36	48	60
15%	106,500	52,102	35,677	28,319	20,343	16,365	14,025
20%	142,000	48,933	33,508	26,599	19,107	15,370	13,172
25%	177,500	45,768	31,338	24,877	17,870	14,375	12,319
30%	213,000	42,597	29,168	23,156	16,634	13,381	11,466
35%	248,500	39,427	26,998	21,435	15,397	12,386	10,613
40%	284,000	36,260	24,829	19,713	14,161	11,391	9,760
45%	319,500	33,092	22,658	17,992	12,924	10,397	8,907
50%	355,000	29,583	20,490	16,271	11,688	9,402	8,054

I am
CHEVROLET

GenSan tuna firms: Models of Mindanao business

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MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

CONGRATULATIONS to the SOCSKSARGEN Federation of Fishing and Allied Industries, Inc. (SFFAII) for the successful conduct of the 6th National Tuna Congress, held once again at the capacious Family Country Hotel and Convention Center in General Santos City on Sept. 2 and 3.

The conference was national in scope—attended by all the major tuna players from Zamboanga, Navotas, and even some from neighboring countries. For all intents and purposes, GenSan is home to RP's tuna industry, and the Federation is its undisputed family.

Last month, the world marked the Sept. 11 tragedy. I recall how GenSan had its own version of 9/11 a few years back, when bombs went off in commercial and public places, casting a pall of gloom to the once-bustling city.

Flashback to 2002, right after the bombing: commerce went on the decline, the residents avoided malls and department stores, taxi companies reduced their vehicle complement, and soldiers in full battle gear roamed the city.

The Federation made short work of that, however, when it braved the threat of further attack and made sure that the 5th National Tuna Congress would push through. The ordinary mortal would probably succumb to the fear of joining such a gathering, with all the major business leaders converging in one place—a tempting target for even the dullest bomber who couldn't hit the broad side of a barn.

Nonetheless, all players big and small—from the federation's head honcho, Domingo Teng, industry stalwarts like Marfenio Tan, Rodrigo Rivera, and Paul Candelaria, fishing company and cannery owners, members of the academic community, pumpboat operators, small fishermen, government officials, to the promo personnel manning the exhibits—got in on the act.

It was the first time since the bombings that a major gathering took place in the city—and it was like a shaft of light that penetrated the dark.

Fast forward to the present: GenSan is up and running again.

There is a new international flight and sea route to Indonesia (if I may say so, the links have reinforced our ties in the EAGA). A sprawling new mall has been built. Commerce throbs downtown, as well as in the fish and seaports of the country's tuna capital.

There is a strong sense of order as the city maintains tight security measures without being blatant.

A major factor, of course, is the tuna industry, which provides direct employment to roughly 50,000 people in the area and contributes 4 percent to the country's GNP.

The fulcrum is the federation, which has enabled the tuna industry to sail through rough seas.

On its own, the federation has made initiatives to ensure sustainability of the country's fishing grounds by forging bilateral agreements with the Pacific Island Nations (PINs) and Indonesia.

It has manifested its commitment to the Convention on Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Species in the Western and Central Pacific. It also supports Presidential Proclamation No. 756, establishing the Sarangani Bay as a protected area.

I am also aware that the federation, through its tireless executive director, Fely Lim, has been instrumental in the success of the Philippines-Australia Quality TVET Program (PAQTVET). I myself support the project, which seeks to establish a truly industry-led Tech Voc Education and Training System for the agriculture and fisheries industry.

This year, the federation reportedly would pursue its application for inclusion in the US Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), so that exporters of tuna products bound for the US may avail of tariff liberties—an endeavor I had committed to continue for Teng ever since I took over his duties in the Export Development Council (EDC).

Through the 6th Tuna Congress, the Federation has requested government to help boost the industry through the extension of Executive Order 209, which allows for duty-free importation of fishing vessels, gear, and other necessary equipment.

If any industry deserves such a tax break, it should be the tuna industry as it has consistently shown its mettle in promoting growth, contributing to regional and national development, and penchant for sustainability and self-regulation.

It is good that the industry has champions like DA Undersecretary Cesar Drilon and Senator Mar Roxas.

We hope that the rest of our national leaders take cognizance of the fighting spirit of the tuna industry and help it in its efforts.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; she is vice chair of the Mindanao Commission Of Women and National Corn Board, chair of the Mindanao TVET, member of the Export Development Council and former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com.)

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Gov't urged to tap workers abroad in promoting RP

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT must create a strategy on tapping nurses and doctors working abroad tp promote the country as a destination for outsourcing health and medical services.

Henry J. Schumacher, executive vice president of the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, estimated that there are about 70,000 nurses in the United Kingdom alone and maybe a thousand in his native Germany.

During an interview, Schumacher said that out of the 8 million or so Filipinos working overseas, there were about 500,000 health care and medical professionals who could help the government promote the country.

"These are professionals who have surely made a lot of patients happy in those countries," Schumacher said. "They would be the best ambassadors who can tell Europeans that there are many professionals like them back home, where services are more affordable than in Europe."

Although there is no large-scale movement of European health care seekers to Asian destinations at the moment, expect something like this to happen in the future, Schumacher said, citing the rising costs, overburdened public health care systems and aging populations in most European countries.

"Countries like India, Thailand and Singapore have caught on to this," Schumacher said. "We hope the Philippines would realize that health care and medical service would be an important business to look into."

He said that in 2003 alone, the three Asian countries attracted more than 600,000 patients and generated some $500 million in revenues.

But Schumacher said that while service infrastructure was more advanced in India, Thailand and Singapore, the Philippines still had an advantage for its "pockets of English-speaking areas."

Even then, the government should ensure that the quality of education for doctors, health professionals and nurses be maintained.

"There will surely be a rush to put up schools, and it is happening now," Schumacher said.

This may lead to a decline in the quality of graduates, he added.

Aside from that, the ECCP official said the country needed to address its image problems on health and hygiene, as well as peace and stability.

"(There is also) a need to accredit Philippine hospitals with public health care systems in the United States, Europe and Japan, and with private sector health insurance providers."

LRTA debt . . .

From page B1

failed to legislate the proposal. She said the DOF could again make a draft bill on the proposal and push for its legislation after it was raised earlier in the Senate.

During deliberations by the Senate on the proposed 2005 national government budget last Friday, Sen. Sergio Osmeña asked why the advances of LRTA from the national government were still being booked as liabilities, instead of capital, when it already seemed a fact that LRTA could not pay the government back.

Osorio said the DOF would be preparing a draft bill on increasing the authorized capital of the LRTA to pave the way for the conversion of the government's advances into equity.

The finance official also said the DOF could do the same with its advances to other government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) that were having difficulty in paying back their loans.

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(Sgd.) RUFO C. VENUS, JR.
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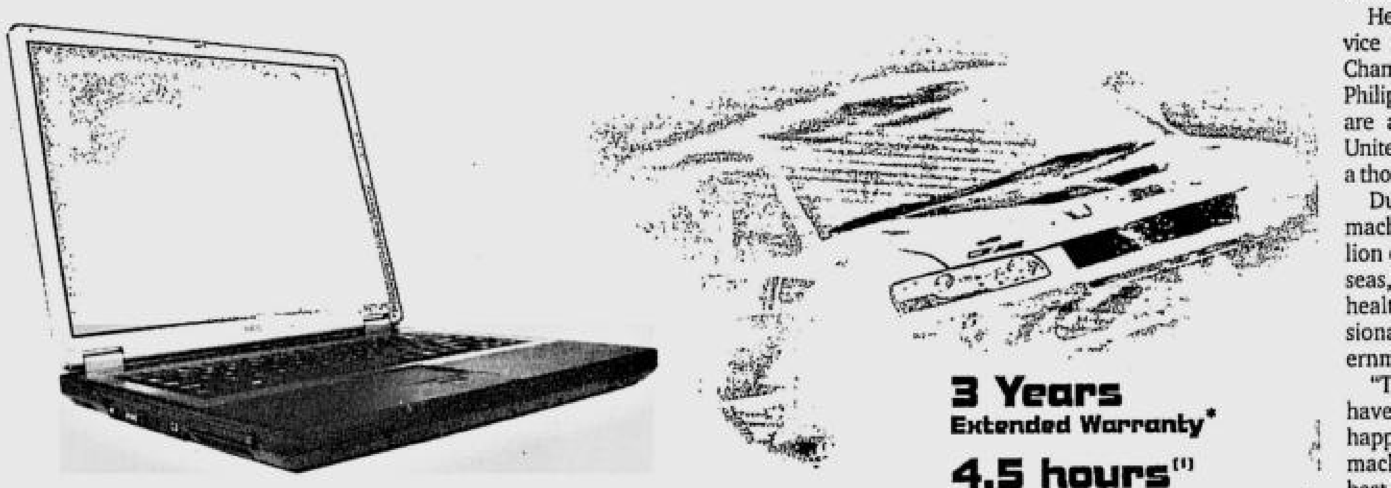

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PROMO PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 31 2004

Foreign firms seek gov't guarantee on validity of BOT contracts

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE EUROPEAN Chamber of Commerce last week expressed support for the government's move in pushing for amendments to the Build-Operate-Transfer law.

ECCP executive vice president Henry J. Schumacher said in an interview that, in particular, business foreign groups wanted the law to ensure that contracts would be honored and that the judicial courts would not touch business deals.

"There has to be more guarantee against the unpredictability of the Supreme Court changing the rules," Schumacher said. "We want the law to state that contracts are valued in this country."

He said this was a general sentiment among foreign business groups, including the Japanese and the Americans.

"I'm sure we can get more infrastructure firms to invest in the Philippines, but such firms want some positive signals like the opening of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3," he added.

Naia Terminal 3 has been the subject of litigation since the Supreme Court ruled in May 2003 that all five contracts related to the project were void, saying these violated the BOT law.

Concessionaire Fraport AG, a German firm, had sought arbitration with the International

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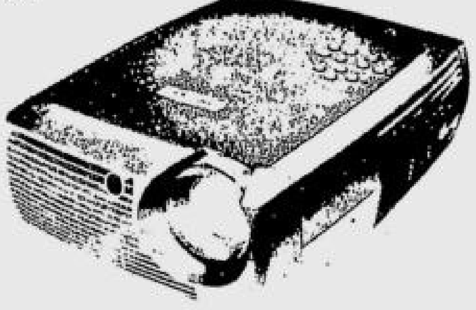

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Standard Insurance Co., Inc. reissued on September 21, 2004 its consolidated audited financial statements for the years 2003 and 2002 to fully conform with the generally accepted accounting principles in the Philippines (GAAP). Correspondingly, the Report of Independent Auditors, SGV & Co., states:

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all materials respects, the financial position of Standard Insurance Co., Inc. and its subsidiaries as of December 31, 2003 and 2002, and the results of their operations and their cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the Philippines.

Presented below are the financial highlights for the year ended December 31, 2003 of the reissued consolidated financial statements of Standard Insurance Co., Inc. and Subsidiaries, and those of eStandard Insurance Corporation (formerly Zurich General Insurance Philippines, Inc.), one of the wholly-owned subsidiaries.

	Reissued Consolidated	eStandard Insurance
Net Premiums Income	1,251,002,209	563,874,617
Premiums earned	1,224,193,573	100,108,536
Net Underwriting Income	347,690,036	117,924,923
Net Income	159,646,586	46,092,942
Total Assets	2,297,319,125	353,622,552
Total Liabilities	1,543,604,777	40,819,228
Stockholders' Equity	753,715,348	312,803,324
Capital Stock	600,000,000	250,000,000

(The consolidation of eStandard Insurance, was effected in December 1, 2003 and the columns above are not additive. However, the combined net premium income, premiums earned and net underwriting income would indicate the group's overall revenues.)

Standard Insurance would like to extend its apology if the company's past audited financial statements qualified by its auditors under GAAP may have been misinterpreted or have misled the public in general, its clients and financial institutions. Standard Insurance previously agreed to its auditors' qualification on its audited financial statements in adherence to transparency and full disclosure. The qualified audited financials were never intended to mislead or misinform the public in any way.

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RP lures $421M in 'hot money'

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES raked in $421.1 million worth of net foreign portfolio investments or "hot money" in the first nine months of the year, 4 percent better than the inflow posted a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

BSP Offficer-in-Charge Armando Suratos said the month of September so far registered the highest net inflow during the year amounting to $78.3 million.

"This may be attributed primarily to positive reaction to the government's efforts to address the fiscal problem, the upgrading of the economic growth forecast and the retention of BSP policy rates," Suratos said.

Despite the government's fragile fiscal position, robust private consumption fueled by election spending and higher usage of cellular phones allowed the domestic economy to grow by 6.2 percent in the second quarter from a year ago.

This brought the first-semester annual gross domestic product growth to 6.3 percent compared to only 4.5 percent in the same period last year, still on track with the government's target range of 4.9-5.8 percent for the full year.

RP LURES/ B6

Fiscal incentives

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

ONE of the major culprits for the current fiscal crisis is the huge amount of foregone revenues from fiscal incentives of all sorts. These take the form of outright tax exemptions, income tax holidays, tax credits and reduced taxes for designated beneficiary firms or industries. The government estimates these to have been worth P741 billion over the last five years, and P175 billion for the year 2003 alone. With a targeted national government budget deficit of P198 billion, most of it could have already been made up for by these revenues lost due to fiscal incentives. The call, then, has been to "rationalize" fiscal incentives, and a corresponding bill has been filed in Congress by no less than House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. as part of the administration measures to address the fiscal crisis.

Culture of exemptions

Given the sheer number fiscal incentives granted to various types of enterprises or economic activities, it would seem that in our economy, tax exemptions are the rule rather than ... well, the exemption. House economic affairs committee chair Rep. Joey Salceda recently remarked that Filipinos seem to have a culture of exemptions. Everyone can think of a good reason why he or his uncle should be allowed to pay less than the usual amount of taxes due, or no taxes at all. And the troublesome part is, they actually get it, thanks to lawmakers who are all too sympathetic—and all too eager to win reelection votes. Hence, there are now at least 110 existing laws and statutes that grant significant fiscal incentives to various types of enterprises or transactions.

Who gets them?

Of the P175 billion lost to incentives, the single biggest chunk, P157 billion, is attributed to the tax and duty exemptions (P152 billion) and income tax holiday (P5 billion) granted under RA 7916 or the Peza Law to firms in export processing zones. These are the incentives justified as needed to attract foreign investors into the country. The second biggest piece (P10.4 billion) is attributed to tax subsidies granted under EO 93 to certain government corporations, notably NFA (P9.7 billion), LRTA (P639 million) and a sprinkling of others. Other tax incentives go to LGUs, the BSP, PTV-4, the Zamboanga Special Economic Zone, Pagcor, the National Museum, National Dairy Authority, and the Comelec, to name a few. Also benefiting are labor unions, cooperatives, jewelry industry imports, aviation fuel imports of PAL, Cebu Pacific and Aboitiz, fishing vessel importations, and a host of many others. Add to this the exemptions from the VAT enjoyed by lawyers, doctors and other professionals, housing developers, book and magazine publishers, and many others. These are mere samplers out of a long list that takes Salceda nine fine-print Powerpoint frames to show his audiences.

Attracting investors

Fiscal incentives need not be bad if they yield benefits that outweigh the costs to the economy in the form of foregone revenues. Do they? At this time when the cash-strapped government is passing around the hat just to help narrow the deficit, this question begs to be asked, item by item.

The biggest chunk is lost to incentives meant to attract investors. This has been a perennial debate between DOF and DTI. DOF worries about the magnitude of directly foregone revenues. DTI argues that the revenues we lose now will be more than regained from other tax collections that will grow with multiplied economic activities resulting from the attracted investments. Who's right? Unfortunately, it has not been possible to verify this quantitatively, as even the best economic models find it difficult to attribute actual economic growth to specific policy variables, especially as the external environment keeps changing. The other issue is on whether the incentives are even critical in attracting those investments. Critics point to the numerous studies and surveys that have shown other factors (e.g. infrastructure, peace and order, political stability) to be higher up in the list of factors determining the decision of investors on whether or not to locate here. Proponents argue that we need to at least align our incentives with our neighboring competitors. I do not believe the debate will ever be settled definitively.

Pandora's box

Other incentives are justified on the basis of a wide range of political, social or (often outdated) economic grounds. An examination of the long list of exemptions makes this immediately apparent. Many of the economic justifications amount to giving preferential treatment to identified "winners" (e.g. publishing, jewelry), an exercise that economists are always wary of due to the economic distortion that results, as against a situation with a level playing field. The whole system has become a Pandora's box that is too complicated, duplicative, fragmented, inefficient and administratively costly to implement. As such, it has been prone to abuse (i.e. fraudulent claims, "double-dipping") and has permitted "incentive shopping" to maximize incentive availment. As Neda chief in the 1990s, I used to get a regular report from the Tariff Commission, a Neda attached agency, on incentive availments. The reports consistently showed about half of the availments to have been spurious or without valid basis.

Culture of exemptions? Hmmm. Maybe I'll start a lobby for tax exemptions for newspaper columnists. Who knows—with the sheer number of us around, we just might get it.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

Foreign firms seek . . .

From page B3

Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes.

Schumacher said that as long as the Terminal 3 issue was not resolved, regardless of who was found at fault, there might never be new infrastructure investments from foreign firms.

"This is a visible sign that BOT does not work under the current system. I can't see any BOT project that has not gone sour," he said.

The official noted that while the Terminal 3 contracts were voided, other BOT project such as those in the power sector were subjected to renegotiation.

"That is ironic because the Philippines made a buzz and landed in the front pages of newspapers around the world when the BOT law was passed. It was a groundbreaking event."

The first BOT law, RA No. 6957, was enacted in 1990 and brought into the local power sector investments amounting to $2.68 billion.

RA 7718 later amended the original law to increase private sector investment in infrastructure. In the five years up to 1999, a total of $15.78 billion in private investment was made in the power, transport, water, information and communication technology and property development.

BSP survey . . .

From page B1

ment in family income and the rise in prices of goods and services in the fourth quarter, family spending for basic commodities could rise by an average of 4.5 percent during the period. Food and electric bills are expected to dominate their household expenditure.

"Based on these expectations, it is likely that the growth rate in personal consumption expenditures would increase modestly starting in the fourth quarter and will continue for the next 12 months," Suratos said.

"Within the next 12 months, under the new administration, respondents expected greater stability in prices, power cost, household income, jobs and investment. Crime rate is expected to decline," he added.

However, the survey showed that unemployment and interest rates were expected to rise and the peso to weaken in the next 12 months.

Metrobank to the rescue

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

METROBANK has stepped in to bail its director Felipe Alfonso out of the P32.5-million scam perpetrated on him by a car salesman.

According to the grapevine, no less than Metrobank president Antonio Abacan has called the various parties to a meeting this afternoon in an effort to settle the competing claims amicably.

Alfonso, the chair of the bank's risk management committee, is facing estafa complaints from a car dealer who received bad personal checks as payment for a Lamborghini Murcielago, a BMW 645 Ci, and a BMW X3.

To those who may have failed to read Friday's column, Alfonso, a former president of the Asian Institute of Management, admitted to issuing four pre-signed blank checks to Anthony Bitanga, owner of the Six Speed car accessories shop in The Fort, to cover for alleged court-related expenses in Batangas.

As it turned out, the Batangas court problem of Alfonso had just been a scheme perpetrated by Bitanga, who instead used the checks to acquire the brand-new luxury vehicles from another dealer.

The first of the four checks, for P4 million, cleared and went to pay for the X3 sports utility vehicle. But the rest bounced, but not after Bitanga had already taken possession of the two other more expensive cars and subsequently resold or mortgaged them.

After his name appeared in this column Friday, financier JP Lomotan called up to clarify that he was merely trying to mediate among the parties involved as he knew both buyer and seller as well as the middleman.

Lomotan said he does not know the whereabouts now of either Bitanga or the Murcielago, but hinted that the sports coupe, which Bitanga was trying to dispose of for P20 million—as against the manufacturer suggested retail price of $281,400—had been pawned to a third party for only P7 million.

The missing yellow Murcielago had for some time been displayed in front of the Six Speed car accessories shop, right past the Mercedes Benz dealership, in The Fort.

Not only did it attract the attention of passing motorists, but also that of motoring magazines Top Car and C!, which both featured the Italian muscle car, apparently the only Murcielago in the country today, in their October issues.

(Correction: AIM, not Alfonso, was a Ramon Magsaysay awardee in 1995 when Alfonso received the award in his school's behalf.)

P132-M house

COCOBANK is auctioning, at P132.35-million starting price, one of the more expensive house and lot packages in the country today.

The choice property is a 1,217.92-sq.m. house on a one-hectare lot in Ayala Alabang's Acacia Avenue.

At the asking price, the cost of the house and lot effectively translates to a reasonable P13,235 a square meter.

Cocobank is even willing to accept a 10-year payment plan for the property, at 10-percent down and 11-percent interest.

Bank officials declined to discuss the provenance of the property; according to the grapevine, it used to be the residence of the late Commissioner Angel Limjoco Jr. of the Marcos-era Securities and Exchange Commission.

Acacia, incidentally, is home to the Zobels, the Pardos, the Madrigals, and the Aranetas, where the subdivision lots are in the 10,000-square-meter cuts. Two senators of the republic, Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Rodolfo Biazon, also maintain their official residences along the gilded avenue.

(Clarification: The two upper Le Triomphe penthouses that PS-Bank is trying to unload used to belong to the family of Rolando

COCKTALES/ B6

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BPI fails in bid to buy Indon bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALAS' Bank of the Philippine Islands and its offshore allies were knocked out of the race for a controlling stake in PT Bank Permata Tbk, Indonesia's seventh biggest lender.

BPI executive vice president Aurelio Montinola III said the bank had teamed up with Indonesia's Bank Danamon, UK-based Barclays Bank and Temasek Holdings of Singapore to bid for Bank Permata, which is being privatized.

"We were not included in the shortlist," he told reporters in an interview.

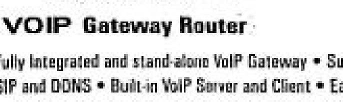
Up for grabs was a 51-percent interest in the Jakarta-based bank valued at about $382 million. After the recent shortlisting of bidders, the winner is expected to be announced by December.

Permata has more than 300 branches in Indonesia and 29 trillion rupiahs of assets at the end of 2003. The Indonesian government, which controls 97 percent of the bank, also plans to unload a 20-percent stake through the stock market later this year.

Nevertheless, Montinola said BPI was proud to have been invited by these foreign institutions to be part of their consortium and noted that the bank could make use of a similar team-up with them when other opportunities arise in the future.

Analysts said that except for BPI, which has ample capital funds, banks in the Philippines have a slim chance to expand overseas because of the high cost of domestic funds.

Sure Savings for Voice & Data Communications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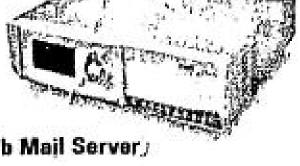
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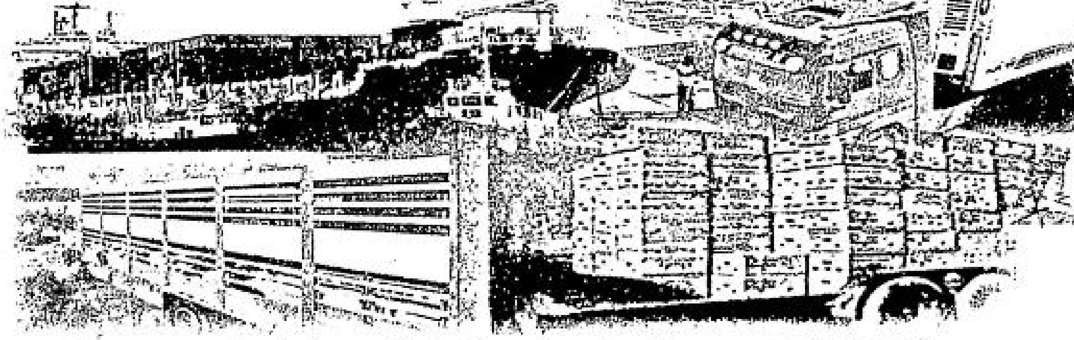
Transport: A key link for Agriculture and Food

AGRI LINK 2004
11th International Agribusiness Exhibition and Seminars

FOOD LINK 2004
5th International Food Processing/ Packaging and Food Products Exhibition

October 14-16, 2004
World Trade Center
Metro Manila (WTCMM)

SEMINARS (as of September 29, 2004)

Time	Seminar
October 14, 2004	
1:00 - 3:00 pm	Phytogenic Solutions for High Performance Farming/ The Fourth Generation of Mycotoxin Binders *by:* Agrimate, Inc. *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)* Usage and Biosafety of Genetically Modified Corn and Soybean in Animal Feeds *by:* Monsanto Phils. *(Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
3:30 - 5:30	The Relationship Between Environmental Control and Viral Disease Outbreak *by:* Mingley Trades *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)* Control of Piglet Scours / Gamefowl Management and Conditioning *by:* Univet Agricultural Products *(Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
October 15, 2004	
10:30 - 12:30 pm	Salmonela Control in Farm and Feemill *by:* Diconex (Phils.), Inc. *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
10:30 - 3:00	Knowing French Technologies in Agriculture and Services *by:* Mission Economique Manila Slaughtering, Dressing and Feeding Equipment for the Poultry Industry *by* Bayle and PAL "WINE MAKING" A Tradition in France *by:* Le Cellier and Flee des Lois Preparation and Transformation of SASSO Chicken *by:* Pamora Farm Growing SASSO Chicken in the Philippines *by:* SASSO Duck Industry in France and What Can Be Done in the Philippines Using Quality Breeds *by:* Sepalm Hog Industry: The French Expertise in Genetics; Acclimatization and Optimization of the Inseminations in Gilts and Sows *by:* France Hybrides New Trends for Grinding and Conditioning in the Aquatic Feeds Plants *by:* Stolz Sequipag *(Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
1:00 - 3:00	Using Organic Selenium and Fermented Yeast Culture in Swine and Poultry Diet *by:* Philchema, Inc. *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
3:30 - 5:30	Use of Poultry Byproduct Meal in Pig Starters / Use of Poultry Byproduct Meal in Aquafeeds *by:* National Renderers Association - Hongkong *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
October 16, 2004	
10:30 - 12:30	Organic Farming of Salad Greens *by:* Leemasters Int'l. Systems, Inc. *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)* Understanding & Managing Transport, Logistics & the Supply Chain *by:* Aboitiz Logistics, Inc. *(Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
1:00 - 3:00	Global Strategic Initiatives of Syngenta on Food Value Chain *by:* Syngenta Phils. *(Venue: Seminar Room 1)*

EXHIBITORS' LIST (as of September 29, 2004)

INDOOR: Abellar Eqpt.•Aboitiz Transport Group•ACMC UK•Agri Specialist•Agrimate•Alminco•Amanatosan Trading•Aquasur Resources•Argent Lab •Art, Inc •Asia Giant Ent.•Atlanta Inds.•Belmont•Biomin Lab. Singapore•CEFN Phils.•Chia-Tung Phils.•Cledacor Ent.•Cryo Reefer Van•DA Regional Office•DA-NAFC•DAR•Diconex (Phils.)•DOST-Filipino Inventors•Easy Bio Phils.•Eurasia Cassava Ventures•FBIC Reefer Van Corp.•Feedmix Specialist•Fibervan Mfg & Trading•First Phil. Scale•Floatech Int'l.•Gallery Red•GDM Trading•Gourmet Farms•Grains Handlers Phils.•GSI Asia•Handyware Phils •Inca Plastics•Interheat•Intertool Precision Grp •Jeida Farm Supply Corp •Jenn Yang Livestock Resources•L.A. Agro Ind'l. Technik•Lexber•Livestock Grp.-Dept. of Agriculture (BAI, LDC, NDA, NMIC, PCC)•Luz Farm•Manila Bulletin Publishing•Marid Agribusiness Digest•Maysan Casting•MIK Phils.•Mingley Trades & Imports•Monsanto Phils.•New Tatson Weighing Eqpt.•Nova Laboratories•Nuevo Milenio, Inc.•OPTA•P&J Agr'l Trading•Paleono AP, Inc •Philchema•PHILFOODEX, Inc •Philmalay Poultry Breeders•PHTRC•PIC Phils •Pixografx•Plastimer Ind'l. Corp.•Purina•Royal Vet•Salmot•Sanko Plastics•Sea Crop Multipurpose Coop •Shenzhen Starway Ent •SMFI B-Meg•SMFI Vet Med•Sparkler Far East•Supervet Int'l •Synergy•Syngenta Phils •Tang-Cor Mfg •Tefal Mktg.•United Vinyl•Univet Agr'l Prods •Vemavel•VIV Thailand•Wasmiya Holdings•
FRENCH Pavilion: Bayle/PAL•France Hybrides•Le Cellier/Flee Des Lois•Mission Economique•Pamora Farm•Sasso-Sepalm•Stolz Sequipag

RETAIL: Agri-Aqua Network Int'l.•Aimee's Footwear•Albay Pilinut•Alson's Aquaculture•Alter Trade•Carica•Country Dried, Inc.•East West Seeds•Eng Bee Tin Chinese Deli•Exquisite Focus•G.O. Eng'g.•Gaden, Inc •Green Petals•Halcyon AA Agrix•Harbest Agribusiness•Hoobee Packaging•King Louis•KSK Food Prods.•Mabuhay Orchids•New Poland Bakers•Omar Yapchiongco •On the Go Ventures•Pharmacare•Sagana 100 Phils •See's Int'l Food Mfg •Seminis Phils •Sunrise Holiday•TLRC•Tryco Pharma Corp.•Water & Drinks Ent •Xylena Farm•
OPTA Pavilion Backto Basics•Bole Central Arengga•Cara Natural Prods •Ever Rich Farms•Geo Farm•Horbakh Inds •Herbana Farms•Natural Wonders•Rita Ritz Bakeshop•Sorsogon Foods•Veggi Life Green Herbs•*PHILFOODEX Pavilion:* Adelina's Ham•Carm's Food Ent.•Dalisay Sweets•Dono Int'l •Fenor Foods•Ilocos Food Prods.•Jammies Homebake Goodies•Marjorie's Best Delights•Moga Fishing Corp •Navarro's Food•Pickfresh•RPM Pili Nut

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Regulatory issues seen to delay Smart's acquisition of Piltel

By Clarissa S. Batino

THERE has been a delay in Smart Communications Inc.'s acquisition of 92 percent of Pilipino Telephone Corp. from the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Smart is originally set to complete its acquisition of 92 percent of Piltel from PLDT by the end of September.

This was the timetable set by the group when Piltel obtained the go-ahead of its shareholders last Sept. 3 to increase its authorized capital to P12.8 billion from P3.5 billion.

But according to Napoleon Nazareno, PLDT and Smart president, they were still securing all the necessary approvals and that completing the task by yearend was more realistic.

Nazareno over the weekend said that the delay would not affect the target of consolidating Piltel and Smart books by the end of the third quarter because of new accounting standards that the PLDT group had adopted.

"We are still getting all the regulatory approvals," said Nazareno in an interview. "The end-September timetable was an optimistic target. Yearend is more realistic."

Smart would own 92 percent of Piltel after converting the Series K preferred shares into common shares followed by the purchase of PLDT's remaining common Piltel shares.

"Once we own 92 percent of Piltel, we are going to closely align the operations of Smart and Piltel," said Nazareno after the stockholders meeting on Sept. 3. "We would let Piltel take advantage of the growth especially from the lower segment of the market."

Smart is buying 92 percent of Piltel from PLDT. The equity transaction comes in two stages. The first is the purchase of 59 million Series K convertible preferred shares equivalent to about 47 percent. This would be followed by the acquisition of 767 million common shares equivalent to about 45 percent.

As of Sept. 3, Smart had converted 4.825 million of the preferred shares into 820.25 million common shares equivalent to a 32.7 percent stake. At that time, PLDT continued to hold 30.5 percent.

Nazareno over the weekend declined to elaborate as to what had caused the delay, nor the impact it would have on the plan to shift a bigger portion of Talk N' Text revenue to Piltel.

A source from Piltel said there were no more approvals that needed to be secured.

"Maybe it was just a matter of timing," the source said.

Currently, Smart gets half of Piltel's revenues from Talk N' Text, after the former allowed Piltel access to the Smart network. Last year, Piltel's cellular phone revenues reached about P9 billion. In the first half, Piltel and Smart split about P5.8 billion in sales.

Nazareno said on Sept. 3 that the changes expected within the fourth quarter would enable Piltel to post substantial profits and to utilize billions of pesos in tax credits incurred from years of operating in losses.

Nazareno earlier said he was worried that Piltel's financial performance in the third quarter was affected by weakness in the foreign exchange. The peso hit a new low of P56.45 last week.

But despite uncertainties that may affect the company's performance, Nazareno said that the company would likely meet its revised income target of P1.1 to P1.2 billion this year, up from an earlier forecast of about P400 million.

"Our income in the third quarter may slow down due to foreign exchange," said Nazareno, who also chairs Piltel. "This is a component that is very uncertain for us. It is so hard to make any forecasts."

He could not say whether Piltel sustained during the current quarter the strong performance it had posted between April to June, registering more than P800 million in profits.

Adding the first two quarters, Piltel posted an income of P810 million in the first half out of net revenue of P2.6 billion. In the first half of 2003, the company registered a net loss of P535 million.

Last year's peso depreciation by about 4 percent forced the company to book P1.56 billion in foreign exchange losses from only P1.13 billion in 2002.

Piltel incurs foreign exchange losses every time the peso depreciates in value against the dollar and the yen. The company has outstanding debts of about $400 million of which 69 percent or about $680 million was absorbed by Smart.

RP telco to tie up with Singapore carrier to tap OFW market

SMART Communications Inc. is trying to hook up with Mobile One, the second-largest carrier in Singapore, to bring its 1528 Smart product to about 85,000 Filipinos in the Lion City.

Sources said Smart would want to launch its 1528 in Singapore soon, following a successful debut in Hong Kong last August.

There are now 23,000 subscribers to 1528 Smart in the Crown Colony, where the Philippines' biggest wireless company tied up with CSL to bring Smart services to 180,000 Filipinos in Hong Kong.

Smart claims its 1528 allows subscribers access to cheaper text messaging, voice call and other innovative products.

In Hong Kong, for instance, officials said Filipinos could text their family in the Philippines for only 50 HK cents per message sent instead of 80 HK cents to HK$1 through other carriers.

All one has to do is to buy the 1528 Smart SIM card. Smart's partnership with foreign carriers allow it to use the network so it could pass through and deliver the Smart services to Filipinos.

Napoleon Nazareno, president of Smart and its parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said they were looking to forge partnerships with operators in Asia and Europe to service Filipino workers overseas.

He said the group would like to go into another country before yearend.

The latest Smart innovation is part of a grand plan to cash in on about 8 million Filipinos working overseas, sending close $8 billion to their families each year.

Smart Padala had handled about 15,000 transactions worth P120 million since it was launched on Aug. 1, according to PLDT.

The cash-rich mobile phone company said it was targeting to hook up between 30,000 and 35,000 Filipinos overseas to its 1528 program this year.

PLDT said it was looking to offer 1528 in other Asian countries as well as in Europe. The next targets are Singapore and Italy where, according to officials, there are a sizeable number of Filipinos.

PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan said the First Pacific group was now looking at three ways to expand the telecom business in the region. First Pacific Co. Ltd. owns 24 percent of PLDT.

"One is to invest in a telecom company by putting in equity," said Pangilinan. "Another is something like what we did in Hong Kong, where we tied up with another carrier to bring wireless services of a subsidiary. Another option is to focus on retail by selling prepaid cards."

Pangilinan said the 8 million Filipinos working overseas would be a big market for the integrated services of the PLDT group's fixed-line and international gateway, wireless and data operations.

"Hopefully, we can eventually capture the majority of the business from the 8 million Filipinos overseas," said the PLDT chair. "We started with Hong Kong and we would be bringing the same products to other areas where there are many Filipinos."

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 1, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	18	17.25	18	251,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46	45.5	46	473,000
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	1,610
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	42.5	44	42.5	44	88,300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.43	0.44	0.41	0.44	1,210,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27.5	28	104,900
Philippine National Bank	22.75	22.75	22.25	22.5	16,200
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27.5	27	27.5	12,200
Security Bank Corp.	20.5	21.25	20.5	21	62,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	24	24	99,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	167	167	167	167	50
Manulife Financial Corp.	2410	2410	2410	2410	50
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	172,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	114	114	112	112	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1650	1675	1650	1675	6,560
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21.25	22.25	21.25	22	61,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.9	0.96	0.88	0.96	50,290,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1095	1120	1095	1120	93,650
Ipeople Inc.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.74	250,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	700,000
Manila Bulletin Publ. Corp.	2.42	2.44	2.42	2.44	41,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.75	2.8	2.7	2.75	8,617,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1395	1420	1395	1420	50,340
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	1,630,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	20,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.25	16	15.25	16	46,200
Manila Electric Co. B	24	25.5	24	24.75	1,514,800
Petron Corp.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.95	1,002,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	340,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5	5	5	5	440,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	720,000
Sanitary Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.14	0.2	0.14	0.2	50,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.46	2.48	2.46	2.48	3,143,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	2.95	3	26,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	29	29	29	10,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	26.5	208,800
RFM Corp.	0.72	0.75	0.72	0.75	210,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	1,360,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	47,600
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71	70.5	70.5	70,400
Universal Robina Corp.	9	9.1	9	9.1	70,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	570,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0044	0.0046	0.0042	0.0046	76,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	13,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.3	6.5	6.2	6.4	10,823,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.35	3,175,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	21,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.76	1.74	1.76	50,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	1,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	15	15.5	15	15.5	2,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.56	0.59	0.56	0.58	18,580,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.135	0.145	0.135	0.14	3,580,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,080,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.24	2.32	2.24	2.28	15,656,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26.5	27.5	26.5	27	499,200
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	400,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.65	0.7	0.65	0.69	400,000
Ionics Inc.	1.94	1.96	1.94	1.94	446,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.48	1.52	1.48	1.52	121,000
Medco Holdings	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	6,230,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	1,331,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	20,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	50,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.56	0.57	0.55	0.57	78,480,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.155	10,500,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	600,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.82	0.88	0.82	0.88	360,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	1,720,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.21	630,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	320,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	200,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.68	5,150,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	40,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	1,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,150,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	21.5	22.75	21.5	22.5	411,700
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	10,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.3	6.7	6.3	6.7	24,799,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1,000,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.4	0.45	0.4	0.45	30,640,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	90,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	16,190,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.14	1.18	1.12	1.18	17,619,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	200,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.44	0.43	0.43	370,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	15,000
SM Development Corp.	0.99	1.02	0.98	1	161,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.6	26,949,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.18	0.18	0.14	0.14	50,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	24,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3	3	2.95	3	208,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.22	9,500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.3	0.27	0.29	4,250,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.014	0.016	0.014	0.016	264,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.017	0.019	0.017	0.018	337,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	887,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.027	1,700,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	2,740,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	570,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.15	480,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	1,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	50,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	101,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.033	8,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	440,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,200,000	Pls. Call
Alta Vista	300,000	-
Baguio Country Club	630,000	550,000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	10,900,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	10,800,000
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,600,000/1,800,000*	-
Tagaytay Midlands	-	650,000
Wack Wack Golf	6,600,000	6,500,000

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Calatagan Golf	60,000	-
Camp John Hay	Pls. Call	180,000
Canlubang Golf	-	420,000
Canyon Woods	150,000	-
Capitol Hills	135,000	-
Cebu Country Club	-	1,500,000
Celebrity Sports	150,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	250,000/350,000*/350,000**	-
Forest Hills A/C*	160,000/250,000*	210,000*
Luisita Golf	400,000	-
Manila Polo	2,450,000	2,350,000
Manila Southwoods A	Pls. Call	360,000
Makati Sports Club	210,000	185,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	180,000/200,000*	150,000
Mimosa C3/C3*	220,000	280,000*
Mimosa Golf Ind.	180,000	130,000
Mt. Malarayat A/B*	180,000	260,000*
Orchard A/B*/C**	Pls. Call/330,000*/400,000**	180,000/Pls. Call**
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000/160,000*/200,000**	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	70,000	-
Sherwood A/B*	60,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	530,000
The Palms Country Club	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Country Club	400,000	380,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	140,000	-
Valley Golf	Pls. Call	

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	SELLING	BUYING
Alabang Country Club "A"	1.2M	please call
Baguio Country Club	650K	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60K	
Capitol Hills Golf Club	-	110K
Canlubang Golf Club		430K
Celebrity Sports Club	140K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	220K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	300K	-
Eastridge Golf Club "B"	please call	
Makati Sports Club "A"		200K
Manila Golf Club - Ind.	11.3M	
Manila Polo Club		2.350M
Manila Southwoods "A"	375K	
Manila Southwoods "B"		640K
Metro Club "A"	please call	130K
Mimosa (Ind.)		100K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"	please call	250K
Palm Country Club	690K all in	550K
Punta Fuego	500K	450K
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	165K	
Riviera Golf Club "B"	150K	
Rockwell Club	280K	-
Spa & Lodge	550K	-
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.5M	-
Sta. Elena Golf Club "B"	please call	please call
Subic Yacht Club-Ind	130K	
Tagaytay Higlands Golf Club	-	730K
Tagaytay Midlands	-	675K
Valle Verde Country Club - Ind.		120K
Valley Golf Club	250K	
Wack Wack Golf Club	6.4M	please call

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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,000,000	1,300,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	-
Baguio Country Club	500,000	650,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	60,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	70,000
Camp John Hay	-	200,000
Canlubang	420,000	-
Canyon Woods	-	160,000
Capitol Hills	-	130,000
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,900,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	160,000
Club Filipino	100,000	140,000
Eagleridge "A"	-	270,000
Eagleridge "B"	-	300,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	160,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	220,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	160,000	200,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	Please Call	11,800,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,600,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,300,000	2,500,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	300,000	380,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	370,000
Metroclub "A"	150,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	150,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	260,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	200,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	250,000	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	450,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Spa & Lodge	550,000	650,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,150,000	1,525,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	350,000	450,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	850,000
Tagaytay Midlands	600,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	150,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	200,000
Valley Golf	220,000	260,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	Please Call	6,800,000

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Cocktales

From page B5

Asis of Maalikaya fame. The other penthouse units, on the Salcedo Village side, that were mentioned in the Sept. 27, 2004, column still belong to Rep. Gilbert and Nikki Teodoro.)

Heard through the grapevine

EXPECT luxury car prices to go up again, at least for those CBU imports that are shipped through the Port of Manila.

The customs authorities there have now discarded the Congress-enacted transaction value as the basis for determining the excise and VAT taxes of the imported vehicles, arguing that the valuations presented by importers are either undervalued or outright fictional.

Hard-pressed to increase collections, the customs officials have again resorted to the so-called "blue book" to determine the approximate prices of the luxury vehicles.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

Bullish sentiment seen ...

From page B1

main buoyant in the coming weeks.

"The market will take its cue on upcoming corporate earnings results coupled with developments on the privatization of transmission and generation assets of National Power Corp and the possible passage of tax reforms in the fourth quarter," Dy said.

BPI Trade, however, warned that threats of high oil prices and the weakening peso might limit the market's climb.

"If high oil prices persist up to next year, this may slow down consumer consumption and, eventually, corporate earnings," BPI Trade said.

Meanwhile, Jovis Vistan of AB Capital Securities noted that for the month of September, the stock market index ended with an 11.5-percent gain from its close in August.

"The market is expected to sustain its positive momentum (this) week. The market's positive outlook and strong momentum is likely to carry the market higher in the fourth quarter," he added.

Vistan said market players were also expected to buy major blue chip companies, ahead of the release of third-quarter corporate earnings later this month. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

RP lures $421M ...

From page B4

As a result, multilateral institutions like the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund upgraded their growth outlook for the country this year.

Suratos said the month of July recorded the lowest net inflow at $28.7 million owing to heightened fears over the budget deficit.

"The net inflow increased to $60.5 million in August mainly due to strong first half earnings of select blue chip firms and the BSP decision not to tighten monetary policy despite the build-up of inflationary pressures brought about by rising oil prices," he said.

The BSP has kept its key policy interest rates unchanged at 6.75 percent for the overnight borrowing or reverse repurchase rate and 9 percent for the overnight lending or repurchase rate since July last year.

Portfolio inflows refer to non-resident investments in peso bank deposits, government securities/money market instruments and securities listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

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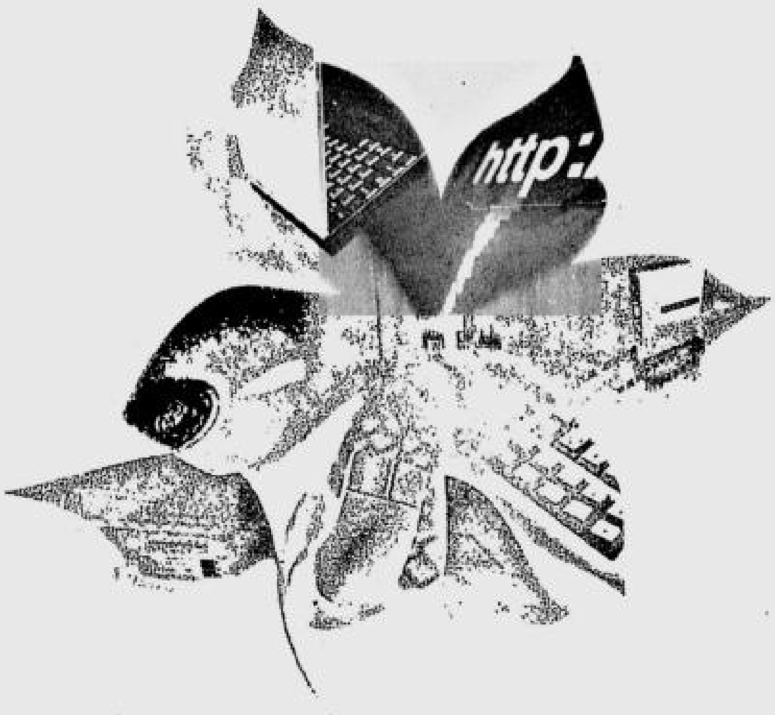

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Oil import bill up 16% despite drop in volume

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE the volume of oil imports dropped by 3.7 percent in the first half of the year to 65.27 million barrels, the country's oil import bill rose 16 percent due to the escalating prices of crude in the world market.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that the cost of importing 65.27 million barrels of oil in the first semester this year reached $2.4 billion, higher than the $2.07 billion spent for the importation of 67.74 million barrels in the same period last year.

In the first quarter of the year, the volume of oil imports was lower at 33.1 million barrels compared with the 35.48 million barrels imported in the same period last year. However, the import bills during the comparative periods were almost the same at $1.17 billion. This was attributed to the $2-per-barrel increase in the average price of crude during the first three months of the year from $33.20 a barrel in the same months last year.

The escalation of world oil prices became more pronounced beginning April amid speculations of possible supply disruptions.

From April to June this year, the world prices of crude averaged at $38.40 per barrel, up from the average of $27.70 a barrel in the same months last year. This resulted in a big jump in the country's oil import cost.

For the second quarter alone, the country spent $1.24 billion for the importation of 32.17 million barrels of oil, much higher than the $894 million spent for the 32.26 million barrels bought in the same period last year.

Crude prices breached the $50-a-barrel mark recently, even while oil producing countries were already producing at near full capacity.

Some of the major factors that contributed to the rise in world oil prices were the persistent threats of terrorism to Middle East oil installations, the uncertain state of Russian oil giant Yukos, and the huge demand from the United States and China.

Recently, unrest in Nigeria coupled with the surge in demand in the advent of the winter months further fueled price increases.

In view of the rising import bill, local oil firms were forced to obtain more foreign currency deposit unit (FCDU) loans from local banks.

In the second quarter of the year, oil companies tapped as much as $511 million in FCDU loans, more than double the $243 million they got in the same period last year.

This, according to analysts, exposed the local oil companies to huge foreign exchange risks as their earnings are local currency-denominated.

Recently, the peso touched an all-time low of 56.45 to $1 due to the rising oil import bill.

The rising oil import bill combined with the weak peso should prompt local oil firms to do a lot of hedging, analysts said.

Pre-need sector sales up 20.8% in first 8 mos.

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PRE-NEED insurance companies registered a 20.8-percent growth in sales in the first eight months of the year to P25.5 billion from P21.09 billion in the same period last year.

However, data from the Securities and Exchange Commission showed that the number of plans sold dipped by 3.6 percent to 335,631 from 348,116 during the period covered.

An SEC official earlier said this could be attributed to the hike in the prices of plans.

Of the plans sold from January to August, pension plans accounted for the bulk of the sales amounting to P14.18 billion, up by 33.4 percent from P10.63 billion in the same period last year.

Education plans were a far second , growing 8.85 percent to P9.2 billion from P8.44 billion. Sales of life plans increased 4.45 percent to P2.11 billion from P2.02 billion.

In terms of the number of plans sold, pension plans grew 4.67 percent for the eight-month period to 180,848 plans from 172,783 last year.

Education plans fell 6.7 percent to 92,086 while life plans slipped 18.24 percent to 62,697.

For the month of August, alone, total fell 25.6 percent to P3.03 billion from P4.07 billion in July. Sales of life plans, however, rose 56.4 percent in August to P431 million, from P275 million in the previous month.

The total number of plans sold in August also dropped 16.7 percent to 40,383 from 48,480 in July led by declines in the sales of pension and education plans. In the same month, the total number of life plans sold grew 35.6 percent to 11,061 from 8,157 in July.

For education plans, Philam Plans Inc. posted the highest sales during the eight-month period amounting to P2.4 billion. In August, alone, Philam sold P436 million worth of education plans.

College Assurance Plan Philippines (CAP), for its part, sold P1.63 billion worth of plans from January to August.

The SEC has yet to renew the license of CAP to sell education plans after its dealer's license expired last Sept. 30. The company is in the process of completing the requirements for an extension of its dealer's license. The SEC had ordered CAP to stop selling plans in mid-August after the pre-need firm used up the P5 billion worth of plans it was allowed to sell to the public.

In August alone, CAP sold 636 education plans worth P54.8 million.

For pension plans, Philam Plans led the pack with sales of P4.2 billion from January to August.

Phone makers urged to produce cheaper handsets for mass market

GSMA chair Craig Ehrlich (left) interviews Maxis Mobile's Jamaludin Ibrahim and Nazareno during the GSMA conference.

SINGAPORE—Smart Communications Inc. president and CEO Napoleon L. Nazareno has urged phone manufacturers to develop more affordable basic handsets so wireless operators can serve more lower-income subscribers.

"We are talking here of addressing real needs of a significant chunk of the population," he said.

Nazareno added that it was "unfortunate" that phone manufacturers were concentrating on high-end phones, despite the fact that lower-cost handsets were an important component in the overall mobile phone penetration growth rate.

Nazareno spoke during the opening day Fireside Chat session before delegates of the recent 3GSM Asia Conference. He was interviewed by Craig Ehrlich, chair of the GSM Association (GSMA), alongside fellow CEOs Jamaludin Ibrahim of Maxis Mobile (Malaysia) and Sunil Mittai of Bharti Enterprises (India). The Opening Keynote Session theme was "The Next Billion—Growing Subscribers and Revenue."

This year's 3GSM Asia Conference was held at the Suntec International Conference and Exhibition Center in Singapore from Sept. 27 to Oct. 1.

It is the annual congress of the GSM Association, the premier global trade association for GSM mobile operators.

The top executives interviewed discussed their business strategies. Nazareno answered questions regarding Smart's experience in broadening the Philippine wireless market through innovative applications and a shift in business strategy.

He also tackled the development of Smart's pioneering and highly successful mobile commerce services and how they had opened up the market to lower income customers and contributed to industry growth.

Asked why Asian mobile operators were more aggressive and creative in developing innovative wireless services, Nazareno credited the challenge of answering the needs of a financially-challenged market.

"In Smart's case, this perspective of the challenges of the Philippine market has led to the development and launch of groundbreaking mobile commerce services as such as Smart Load, Pasa Load and Smart Padala." said Nazareno.

Smart handles over two million Smart Load transactions and another two million Pasa Load transactions daily, making the two sister services the most lively and extensive consumer mobile commerce system in the Philippines.

Telecom industry analysts have credited these electronic loading services for helping push the country's mobile phone penetration rate to 33 percent, way beyond previous projections of 25 percent for a low-per capita income population.

Smart is a member of the GSMA, the global trade association that exists to promote GSM technology throughout the world. The GSM Association is the global trade association that exists to promote, protect and enhance the interests of GSM mobile operators throughout the world.

GOINGS ON

SBC's new offering

SECURITY Bank Corp. has introduced the Secure Dollar Optima, a fixed-term dollar investment account, which guarantees a higher yield than other dollar time deposit rates.

For a minimum initial deposit of $20,000, clients can opt to place their funds with the bank for a period of one, two or three years, with fixed term interest rates upon maturity, and credited semi-annually to their accounts. Clients will be given a certificate of time deposit as proof of their investment.

"The account comes with a pre-approved revolving peso credit line facility, which gives the client peso liquidity if need arises. The client can also use the account as collateral for loans up to 90 percent of the peso equivalent of his dollar investment," said Joven B. Hernandez, bank SVP and customer banking group head.

Hernandez said that Secure Dollar Optima also allowed clients to reap and enjoy their earnings every six months.

BPI units link up with 89-100

AYALA Life Assurance Inc. and Ayala Plans, Inc., wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, are leveraging the resources of the BPI Unibank by giving their clients and agents access to the BPI Express phone banking or "89-100" system beginning Oct. 1.

Company officials said they hoped to optimize operating synergies by directing inquiries of Alai and AP clients and agents to the 89-100 Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS).

"All facilities and networks that can enhance various areas of customer servicing are continually being explored," said Aurora S. Soriano, BPI vice president for Insurance Group Operations. We offer the full range of financial services, and we provide customer and agent support 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Customers and agents accessing information in connection with Alai and AP can simply key in 89-100, and press "0", other products and services, for their "life insurance and pre-need requirements "in the initial automated voice-delivered menu.

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The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Will SSS run out of money by 2015?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

CORAZON de la Paz, SSS president and CEO, has intensified her media blitz. She warns everyone willing to listen that, unless members' contributions are raised, the SSS will run out of money by 2015.

Her horror story is taken from the 1999 actuarial valuation presented in 66 slides during an SSS employees' forum. An actuarial valuation is an assessment of the financial situation projected over a period of years; a financial statement takes up only the financial situation at the end of the year in review. In other words, an actuarial valuation covers a span of time; a financial statement covers a point in time.

The 1999 actuarial valuation predicted that the SSS would indeed run out of money by 2015. This prediction was based on the following changes since the 1990 valuation: salary ceiling was raised from P3,000 to P12,000; the minimum monthly pension was raised from P500 to P1,000 for those retiring after 10 years of service, and P2,400 for those retiring after 20 years of service; the minimum was raised eight times; 10 across-the-board increases, and the return on investment ranged from 12.5 percent to 20 percent.

In spite of these increases in disbursements, the contribution rate remained at 8.4 percent of salary. If the contribution rate were not raised last year to 9.4 percent, which brings in about P5 billion in new money yearly, the SSS would run out of money earlier than 2015.

The 1999 valuation, as presented in the employees' forum, was flawed. It did not show that operating expenses shot up from P496 million in 1990 to almost P4 billion in 1999, a jump of more than eight times in a nine-year span. Oh, sure, some employee benefits, such as gift checks, Christmas and anniversary meal allowances were cut. Yet, operating expenses kept rising. In 2003, operating expenses had gone beyond P4.776 billion, illegally breaching the statutory limits of 12 percent of contributions plus 3 percent of investment income.

If the contribution rate were increased, this illegal overspending would be covered because 12 percent of the additional contributions would be available for operating expenses. Thus, the illegality will vanish.

Another point de la Paz keeps harping on is that, although registered members are rising, the number of paying members is dropping. In 2000, there were 22,621,038 registered members, and 6,954,919 paying members. The difference in the two figures corresponds to retirees (like me), survivors and dependents, who are legally non-paying members.

So, what's the fuss all about?

The media blitz now focuses on collecting some P5 billion from delinquent employers. Of course, this is a problem. But this problem pales when compared with the other collectibles. The P30 billion in small loans (salary, tuition, calamity) to members are hopelessly in arrears. The amnesty offered will surely fail. The P40 billion in low cost housing loans is still begging for a buyer; if a buyer is found, SSS will be lucky if they can get 20 centavos for every peso in loans. There is the P10 billion loss on the Equitable/PCI investment. Finally, there is all that money tied up in real estate, mostly condominium units, which strains the cash flow.

I am not against raising the contribution rate, per se. But, as I said in a previous column, any additional contributions must be subject to the following conditions: benefits will have to be increased; none of the additional contributions will be made available for operating expenses; any investible portion of the new money will have to be invested strictly on government securities, and none of the new contributions will be used to cover losses; these losses are, by law, the liabilities of the national government.

But before everything else, no increase in contributions can be installed until the 2003 actuarial valuation is made, as required by law. I wonder what is holding up the computation of this valuation.

In the end, a permanent solution will have to be found. Otherwise, the financial problem will just keep coming back. As was done in the US, a presidential fact-finding commission should be set up. The chair should be one of the country's biggest businessmen, with enough clout and credibility. The members should be the best professionals from the private sector.

Why am I so involved in this problem? I have gotten my money back many times over after 14 years as a pensioner. The reason is that three of my grandchildren are now working and are now SSS members. For the next ten years, at least one grandchild will enter the work force. I just want to make sure that when they retire, they can look back and say, "Thanks, Lolo!"

2 local airlines vie for additional Japan flights

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Airlines and Cebu Pacific Air are preparing to fly four times a week to Nagoya, Japan starting February 2005.

The Civil Aeronautics Board, however, has yet to make a decision on how to allocate the new flight entitlements from Japan.

PAL president Jaime Bautista said PAL wanted to fly four times weekly to Nagoya, whose international airport will open in February next year.

Cebu Pacific general manager Danilo Mojica said the Gokongwei airline had been asking the CAB to allow it to fly to Japan but all the existing coefficients had already been granted to PAL. Cebu Pacific believes the opening of Nagoya gives it a chance to finally fly to Japan.

PAL flies weekly to Osaka, Tokyo, Fukuoka and Okinawa, Japan.

Mojica said with the 14 new coefficients given by Japan to the Philippines, as a result of the bilateral air talks three weeks ago, Cebu Pacific wanted to fly four times a week to Nagoya and three times a week to Osaka.

"Of the 14 coefficients, seven are to Osaka and seven are to anywhere in Japan except Tokyo where there are no available slots. PAL is already flying to Osaka so we won't be getting any of the new entitlements there. But we want to fly four times a week to Nagoya," said Bautista.

Mojica, however, said the CAB should make a fair decision considering that PAL had already cornered all the previously awarded 47 coefficients.

BAUTISTA

"I don't think it is appropriate for the government to again give everything to PAL. We wanted to fly to Japan but we couldn't because there were no more entitlements. Now there are new ones and we hope the CAB will award them to us," said the Cebu Pacific official.

Bautista said if PAL would use its aircraft, it could consume all the available coefficients to Nagoya.

One coefficient is equivalent to one round trip flight using a Boeing 575 aircraft with a seating capacity of 228; 1.5 coefficients for an Airbus 330, which can carry 250 to 293 passengers and 2 coefficients for Boeing 747, which has seating capacity of 347 to 490.

Japan determines aviation entitlements through coefficients, which are based on aircraft size.

Mojica said the new coefficients would have to be shared with cargo carriers. Lucio Tan's Pacific East Asia Cargo and another small carrier Asia Overnight would like to carry freight to and from Japan.

"There is more volume in Nagoya although the Japanese government is also aggressive in selling Osaka," said the Cebu Pacific official.

The Gokongwei airline said it could "offer lower fare and safe on-time service" like what it had been selling to passengers flying to South Korea and Hong Kong.

The Philippines has been courting Japan to agree to an open skies regime that will lift restrictions on capacity and frequency entitlements for passenger, cargo and chartered flights.

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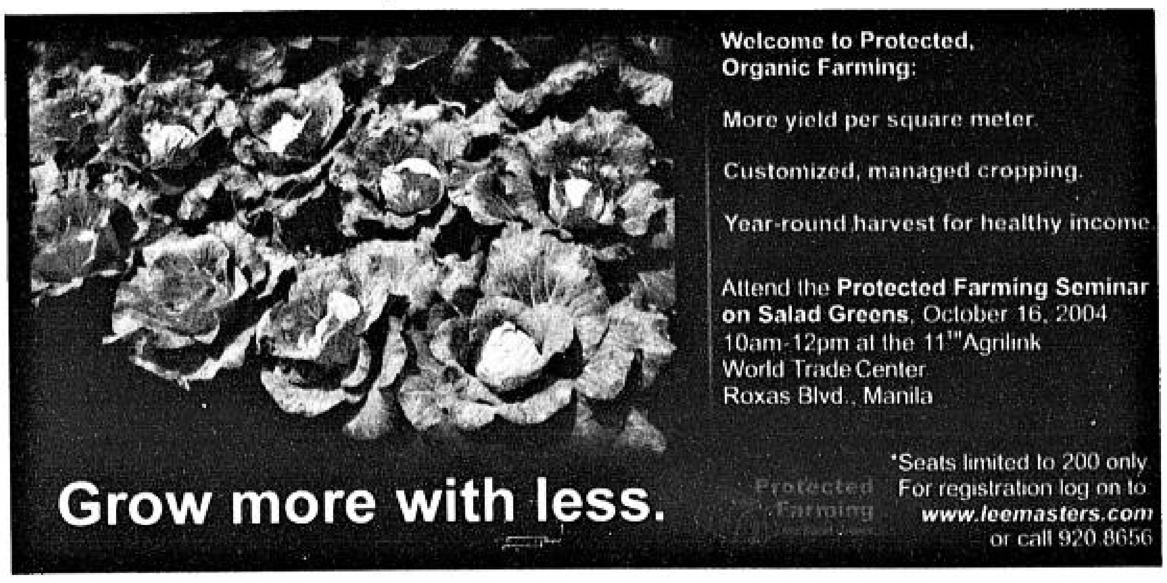

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PAL, Air Macau start code-share

PHILIPPINE Airlines and Air Macau have begun a thrice-weekly code-share service between Manila and Macau, with Air Macau as the operating carrier.

PAL is now able to offer seats on Air Macau flights between the two cities, giving the Philippine flag carrier a commercial presence for the first time in the former Portuguese territory on China's southwestern coast.

"We are delighted to partner with Air Macau in further growing traffic on this sector," said Henry So Uy, PAL executive vice president-commercial group.

"I am pleased to cooperate with Philippine Airlines to develop the market between Macau and Manila," said Li Qiang, vice president-commercial of Air Macau. "The cooperation will enhance exchanges between the two cities, and upgrade trade and tourism activities as well."

The service will enjoy dual designation, with both PAL and Air Macau codes appended to the flight numbers.

Flight PR 851 departs Manila's Naia Terminal 1 every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 9:50 a.m. and arrives at Macau International Airport at 11:50 a.m. The return flight, PR 852, departs Macau at 7 a.m. and lands in Manila at 9 a.m. on the same days.

All flights utilize Air Macau's Airbus A321 aircraft.

Mirant expansion seen to boost economy

THE ASSOCIATION of Stock Analysts of the Philippines (Asap) said the infusion by American firm Mirant (Philippines) Corp. of some $400 million in new investments into the country's power sector would allay fears of a power supply shortage and boost prospects of business and industrial expansion in the country.

Asap's statement came after Mirant announced that it was expanding the capacities of its existing power generation facilities in Quezon and Cebu provinces by an additional 450 megawatts. It is undertaking the expansion project with its partner Global Business Holdings Inc. (GBHI) of the Metrobank group.

Asap director Astro del Castillo said the expansion project "is an important signal to the international business community that the Philippines' efforts to address crucial power issues have so far been productive."

Since the Mirant project is expected to bring in some 450 megawatts in additional capacities within the next fours years, this should assure potential investors that the country will have enough supply of electricity to support the requirements of new and expanded businesses and industries, he pointed out.

Del Castillo also pointed out that the $400 million in new investments followed the recent decision by the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) giving the National Power Corp. provisional authority to raise its generation charges by an average of 97 centavos per kilowatt hour.

Asahi Glass project OKd

ASAHI Glass Philippines Inc. said the Board of Investments has approved its request to register its flat plate solar panel production facilities as pioneer investments.

Company officials said in a statement that AGP's furnace started operations last Sept. 17 after two months of repair and rehabilitation.

AGP is also building a special batch plant for solar cover glass formulation, while additional equipment for glass processing are expected to arrive in April 2005.

AGP expects to start commercial operation of its solar cover glass plant in July 2005.

It was earlier reported that AGP was investing $10.1 million to make solar cover glass. The firm expects the project to yield $25 million a year in export receipts.

AGP, the country's pioneer in the float glass industry, has also announced plans to repair and rehabilitate its float furnace, which produces bulk of its output, by January 2006.

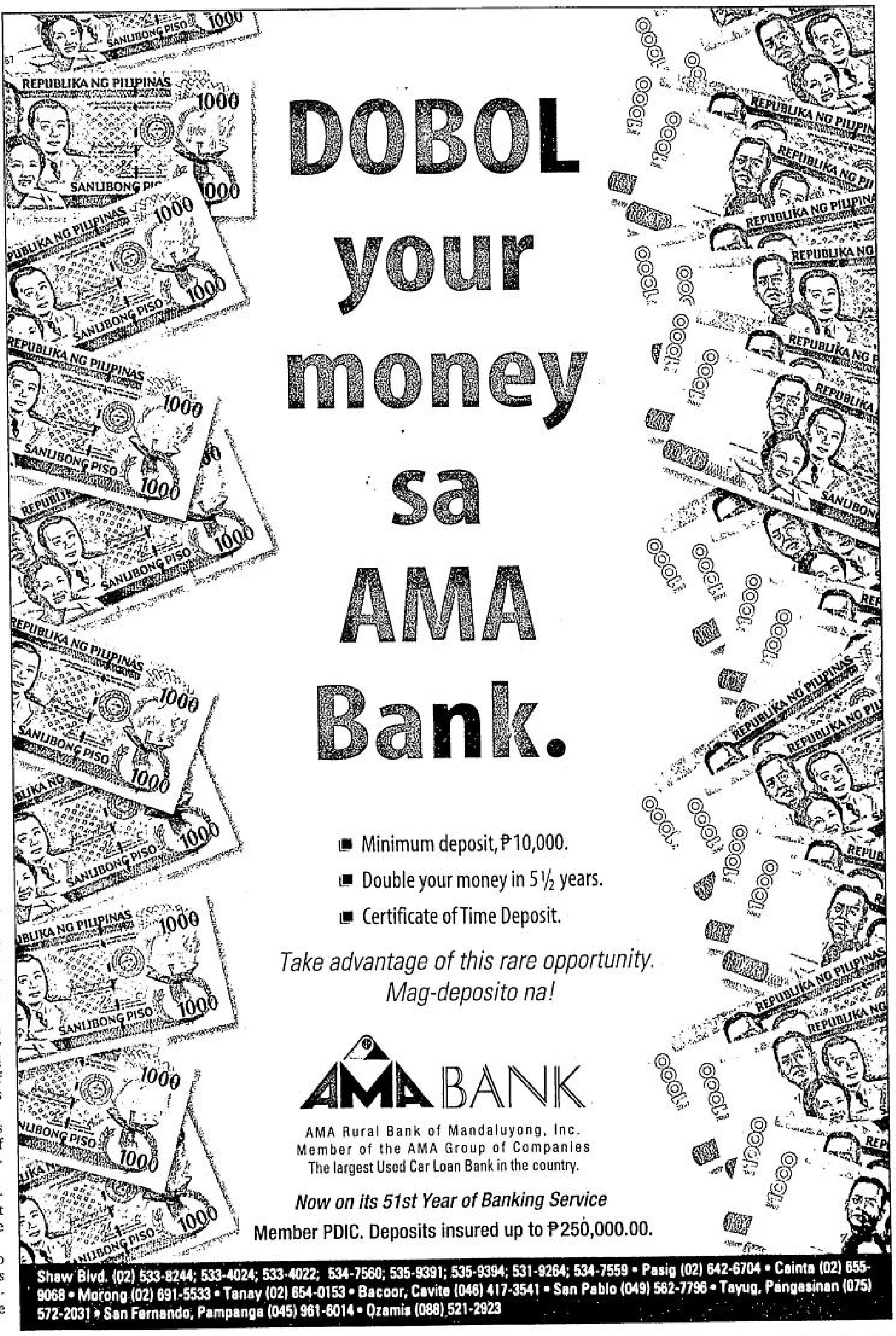
The officials said state-of-the-art improvements to increase productivity as well as capability to produce multiple product types would be some of the firm's options.

They did not say how much they were investing but industry sources said AGP has earmarked some $40 million to upgrade of its float furnace and expand its float glass production line.

As of December 2003, AGP's mother unit Asahi Glass Co. Inc. of Japan has already infused P3.2 billion into its Philippine operations.

This was on top of the state-of-the-art technology and export market access that it provided the company.

By next year, AGP expects to generate more export revenues from its proposed special economic zone in Pasig City, where its plant and offices are located.



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Oil prices pose threat to global economy, G7 says

WASHINGTON—Group of Seven leaders are worried about high oil prices derailing the global economy, but have little means to influence the marketplace, analysts say.

G7 finance ministers and central bankers, in a statement following talks Friday, suggested that oil prices—which closed above $50 for the first time Friday—appear to be the main risk to an otherwise strong global economy.

"Oil prices remain high and are a risk," the G7 said. "We call on oil producers to provide adequate supplies to ensure that prices moderate."

"Right now, oil prices are causing an economic headwind," said US Treasury Secretary John Snow after the G7 talks.

"The geopolitics of oil, and current uncertainties, are causing a short-term phenomenon. The finance ministers and I are committed to promoting policy reforms in each of our countries to speed the return of more reasonable costs."

But analysts said most of the factors are beyond the control of the G7, which represents the seven richest industrial countries.

"The problem is that oil markets are tight as a drum and demand is growing faster than supply," said Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at the economic research firm Global Insight.

"It's not as if Opec is manipulating the market. There's really not much anybody can do until the investments now being made bring some fruit."

Behravesh said the G7 is concerned, however: "If oil prices stay at this level or move higher it could derail the global economy." Joseph Quinlan, economist at Bank of America, said it would be a stretch to think the G7 can "jawbone" the oil markets.

"I think the oil market will change when global growth slows," he said.

"The G7 can be effective in currency markets but they have no real history in the oil markets." Behravesh agreed, but said the G7 nonetheless wanted to express its concern about a major risk to global economic growth.

"Clearly they're worried, and I think this reflects a worry about how much oil prices will affect growth. But it's not that the G7 has much influence. They don't." In an effort to show a balanced view, the G7 statement also called on consumer nations to increase energy efficiency and called for more transparency in global markets by getting more information about supply and demand, principally through the International Energy Agency.

The statement came after New York crude oil futures closed at their highest level ever.

The light sweet crude November futures contract on the New York Mercantile Exchange closed up 48 cents at $50.12 a barrel, posting a record close, on the latest Nigerian worries.

In London, the price of reference Brent North Sea crude oil for delivery in November rose 24 cents to close up at $46.62 a barrel.

European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet called the problem serious.

"All we are observing today is not encouraging," Trichet said, adding that if prices remain high it "could certainly hamper the global economy."

Snow said the G7 may be able to take some of the speculative fever out of the market.

"We're urging the countries with reserves to do everything they can to make sure that the supplies are adequate to meet market requirements," Snow said.

That "will help deal with some market uncertainty, which I think is feeding some speculation which is taking the spot price well above the fundamentals in the markets," the US official said. *AFP*

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Brgy. Zapote, Las Piñas City
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No. 18 Skynet St. Moonwalk Vil.
Minimum Bid Price: P 870,000.00

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L.A 321sqm, F.A 190sqm
Daisy St. Vergonville Subd.
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,000,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 240sqm
Lot 4 Block 12 Chromium Road,
Pilar Village
Minimum Bid Price: P 660,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 141sqm, 85sqm
Unit 5 Estanislao St.
BF Resort Village
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,475,000.00

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L.A. 280sqm, F.A 303.12sqm
No. 20 Polasapis Road,
Pilar Village
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,890,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 292sqm
Pamplona, Las Piñas
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,182,600.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 40.48sqm
4th Floor Wing B, Lingayen Bldg.,
Coastal Plaza Condo
Minimum Bid Price P 540,000.00

CALOOCAN CITY

UCPB - COMML BLDG (5 storey)
L.A. 200sqm, F.A 875sqm
196 G. Luna corner
Lakas ng Mahihirap St.
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,860,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 240sqm,
Along Coaster St.
Bruxtonville Subd
Minimum Bid Price: P 430,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150sqm F.A 174sqm
Adelaida St.
Vista Verde North, Ph. I-F
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,160,000.00

MANILA CITY

UCPB - OLD APT BLDG
L.A. 101sqm
No. 2013 A- C Silahis St.
Sta. Ana, Manila
Minimum Bid Price P 1,080,000.00

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L.A. 571.2 sqm
1427 Looban St., Paco, Manila
Minimum Bid Price. P 12,000,000.00

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L.A 1,758.80sqm
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Batangas St.
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L.A. 150sqm
No 2089 F. Benitez St., Malate
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,950,000.00

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L.A. 832.7sqm
No. 2244 Taft Avenue, Malate
Minimum Bid Price P 27,160,200.00

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L.A 120sqm
No. 2043 Anonas St.,
Sta. Mesa, Manila
Minimum Bid Price P 1,630,000.00

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UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 360sqm
No. 4055 Yague St.,
Mana Dela Paz Village
Minimum Bid Price P 5,940,000.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 129.62sqm
Unit No. 305 3rd Floor,
Ciano Plaza Condo Corp
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L.A. 478sqm
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Sta. Cruz, Makati
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Newton St. Brgy. San Isidro
Minimum Bid Price P 4,020,000.00

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L.A. 317sqm
1765- 1767 Garcia St.(Reposo)
San Miguel
Minimum Bid Price P 38,547,482.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A 36.36sqm
Palm Tower, St. Paul St.
San Antonio Village
Minimum Bid Price P 1,204,243.20

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,580sqm
No. 265 Vito Cruz ext. corner Onyx St., La Paz
Minimum Bid Price P 50,550,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ OLD HOUSE
L.A 746 sqm
19 Paseo De Roxas ext.
Bel- Air Village
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F.A. 60sqm
Olympia Tower, Makati Ave.,
Minimum Bid Price P 3,600,000.00

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F.A. 21.36sqm
Unit 414 4th flr., Asia Mansion I,
Dela Rosa St.
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MALABON CITY

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L.A. 115sqm
Nickel St., Goldendale Village,
Tinajeros
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MANDALUYONG

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 312sqm w/ 2-STOREY
No. 274, Sta. Lucia St., Planview
Minimum Bid Price P 5,150,000.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A. 65.33sqm
Unit 507 Sierra Madre St.,
Ark Condo
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F.A. 125sqm
Sierra Madre St., Ark Condo
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UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 10,000sqm, F.A 1,217.92sqm
517 Acacia Ave
Minimum Bid Price:
P132,350,000.00

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UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 5,593sqm
379 Gov. A. Pascual St. San Jose
Minimum Bid Price P 12,300,000.00

PASAY CITY

UCPB - PENTHOUSE
F.A. 290 sqm
Unit 1502, 15th Floor Marbella 1,
No. 223 Roxas Blvd
Minimum Bid Price P 5,256,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 196 sqm
No. 61 E Verdadero Street, District of Malibay
Minimum Bid Price P 1,176,000.00

PARAÑAQUE CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT W/ PARKING
F.A. 144.70sqm
Unit 908 9th flr.,
Chateau de Baie Condo
Minimum Bid Price. P 4,025,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 226sqm, F.A 153.8sqm
VJ Town Homes, BF Classic
Villamor St.
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,480,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 417sqm, F.A 877.50sqm
Bethsaida St. Multinational Village
Minimum Bid Price P 7,290,000.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT w/ PARKING
F.A. 184sqm
Unit 207 Andalucia Bldg
Bella Villa I, Merville
Minimum Bid Price. P 4,070,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE w/ PARKING
L.A. 103sqm, F.A 185.88sqm
Unit 28-B, Int. Yellowstone St.
South Green Park Village
Minimum Bid Price. P 2,430,000.00

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L.A. 563sqm
20-A Jose Abad Santos,
Bayview Village,
Minimum Bid Price: P 7,970,000.00

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UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 48.95sqm
Heart of the City,
Condo Sct. Albano.
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,580,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 690sqm
41 Sct. Limbaga Street.
Minimum Bid Price P 13,400,000.00

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L.A. 690sqm
44 Zaragosa Street, Araneta Vill.
Minimum Bid Price P 7,735,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 241sqm
47 Mercury Drive,
Tierra Gloria Subd.,
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UCPB - RSDL BLDG
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Lot 6 Blk. 2 Richland Street,
Richland 5 Subd., Sauyo
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UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 182sqm
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Minimum Bid Price P 7,460,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 181.5sqm
No. Agoo Street,
New Haven Subd.
Minimum Bid Price: P 990,000.00

UCPB - RSDL W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 96sqm
No. 17 -A Camiling Street,
NIA Subd.
Minimum Bid Price: P 832,500.00

UCPB - 3 VACANT LOT
L.A. 44sqm
No. 30 Rd. 14 Project 8,
Minimum Bid Price P 484,000.00

UCPB - UNFNSHD RSLD BLDG
L.A. 102sqm
384 P. Rivera Street,
Brgy. Sangandaan,
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,780,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 281sqm
Bighani cor Flores de Mayo St.
Minimum Bid Price P 3,250,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 800 sqm (3 LEVELS)
No. 60 Highland Drive, Bluendge
Minimum Bid Price P 16,923,000.00

UCPB - CONDO W/ PARKING
F.A. 120.17sqm
Jade Place Condo,
Visayas Avenue
Minimum Bid Price P 3,170,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 339sqm, F.A 241sqm
No. 133 Mt. Fairweather Street,
Filinvest
Minimum Bid Price. P 3,900,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 54sqm
Unit 18 Malachi St.
Dionisio Royale. Exe
Minimum Bid Price P 1,440,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300sqm
Cambridge St. Vista Real. Classica
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L.A. 496sqm, F.A 188sqm
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F.A. 62.90 sqm
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Minimum Bid Price P 1,530,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 152.60sqm
62 Gen. Lim Street, Heroes Hill
Minimum Bid Price P 1,670,000.00

UCPB - 8 DOOR APT
L.A. 465 sqm, F.A 443sqm
Banlat St., Carmel Subd.,
Tandang Sora
Minimum Bid Price P 4,920,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 139sqm
Rolex St. cor. Buhusa St.
Charbel Subd. Ph I
Minimum Bid Price P 1,100,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 586sqm, F.A 562sqm
44 Zaragosa St. Araneta Village
Minimum Bid Price. P 7,735,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 103sqm
Moses St. Goodwill Home
Ph 2 Bagbag Nov
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,376,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 343.125sqm
10th St. New Manila Q.C.
Minimum Bid Price P 11,290,000.00

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A. 53sqm
Unit 209, 2nd flr
Prince Jun Condo.
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,410,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 3,139sqm
Green Meadows Ave.,
Green Meadow Subd.
Minimum Bid Price P 48,582,000.00

GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 600sqm, F.A 342sqm
443 Duke St. Greenhills East
Minimum Bid Price. P 17,490,000.00

UCPB - OFFICE CONDO
F.A. 279 sqm
Goldhill Tower, Condominium
Annapolis Street
Minimum Bid Price. P 11,808,000.00

UCPB - OFFICE CONDO
F.A. 138.32sqm
Atlanta Center,
Greenhills, Annapolis St.
Minimum Bid Price P 11,808,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 926sqm
31 cor. Madison & Polk St.,
North Greenhills
Minimum Bid Price P 38,466,000.00

PASIG CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A. 224sqm (w/ yard area)
4th floor Park Chateau Cor. Garnet & Sapphire Sts
Minimum Bid Price P 5,670,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 64.92sqm
Unit 302 4th floor, Hampton
Gardens Phase 1
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,415,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE LOT
L.A. 257sqm, F.A 396sqm
No. 6 Luallhati St.
Dona Damiana Subd., Rosario
Minimum Bid Price P 1,910,700.00

ANTIPOLO

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 179 sqm
Ubas St.,
Town & Country Exec. Village
Minimum Bid Price. P 710,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 834sqm
Selford Streeet
Town & Country Estates,
Minimum Bid Price P 2,853,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 350sqm
Sandringham Street,
Barrington Place
Minimum Bid Price P 1,219,500.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 185sqm, F.A 164sqm
Coolidge St. Cuesta Verde
Executive Village
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,180,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 616sqm
Mount Everest Fairmont Hills
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,540,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 437sqm
Parkridge Executive Village
Bo. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price P 793,260.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,151sqm
Town & Country Estates,
Bo Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,936,600.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 180sqm w/ unfinished house
Fatima Village, Bo. San Isidro,
Minimum Bid Price P 235,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300sqm
New York Bend,
Palos Verdes Subd
Minimum Bid Price P 675,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 304sqm
Cottonwoods Heights
Minimum Bid Price P 1,155,200.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 240sqm
Foliage Hills
Minimum Bid Price. P 912,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 346sqm
Hills of Mata Alta, Bo. Dalig
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,211,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,004sqm
Brgy Rd. Brgy. May - Iba Teresa
Minimum Bid Price P 1,557,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 110sqm, F.A72sqm
San Remo, Hills of Mata Alta
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,000,000.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 750sqm
Marcos Hi -Way, Brgy. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price. P 7,500,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 192sqm, F.A 120sqm
#8 Mayon St.,
Town & Country Hills
Minimum Bid Price: P 935,000.00

CAINTA/ TAYATAY/ ANGONO

UCPB - RSDL LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 976sqm
Noel Subd. Brgy. Dolores Taytay
Minimum Bid Price P 843,264.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 240 sqm, F.A 2087sqm
Williamburg St.,
Richmond Subd., Angono
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,890,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 204sqm
Village East III, Darangan
Binangonan
Minimum Bid Price. P 408,000.00

UCPB -RSDL LOT
L.A. 216 sqm
Saratoga & Monterey
Park Place Village, Cainta
Minimum Bid Price P 540,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 205sqm, F.A 99sqm
Bucharest St., Eastville, Cainta
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,320,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 345sqm
No. 7 Yakal St.,
Doña Justas Subd., Angono
Minimum Bid Price P 585,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 805 sqm, F.A 357.5sqm
Dona Justina cor. Dona Juliana
Filinvest Home
Minimum Bid Price P 7,800,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 524 sqm
#151 Ilang - Ilang St.,
Nieves Hills Subd., Angono
Minimum Bid Price P 1,100,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 230.226sqm
along Feeder Rd.
Bo. Gulnang Bayan
Minimum Bid Price P 11,500,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 216sqm
Monterey & Saratoga St.,
Park Place
Minimum Bid Price: P 540,000.00

BULACAN

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 161sqm
Opel St., Villacor Vil.,
Bo. Langka, Meycauayan
Minimum Bid Price P 2,880,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,152 sqm
along Sampaguita, Area C, Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price: P 567,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 221sqm
3rd Street Bo. Fatima,
Sapang Palay, SJDM
Minimum Bid Price P 360,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 2,912sqm
along Barangay Rd.,
Bo. Sta. Rosa II, Marilao
Minimum Bid Price. P 2,500,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 50 sqm
Ayukit Street, Bo. Binang
2nd & Turo Bocaue
Minimum Bid Price P 100,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 205sqm
Ayukit Street Bo. Binang
2nd & Turo Bocaue
Minimum Bid Price: P 410,000.00

UCPB - IND'S FACTORY
L.A. 22,311.46sqm F.A VARIOUS
Northwest Line of Provincial Rd.,
Bo. Palubig
Minimum Bid Price P 38,740,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 361sqm
Bo. Tabing Ilog, Palo, Marilao
Minimum Bid Price. P 72,000.00

UCPB - TOWN HOUSE
L.A. 60sqm, F.A 58.93sqm
Stanley St., cor. Macagems St.
Stanleyville, Malolos
Minimum Bid Price 690,000.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 444sqm
Mc Highway,
Bo. Burol 1st, Balagtas
Minimum Bid Price P 10,490,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 205sqm
Avocado St. Area F.,
Bo. Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price. P 400,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 180sqm
Bo. Caingin, Malolos
Minimum Bid Price. P 414,000.00

CAVITE CITY

UCPB - VACANT LOT
L.A 589sqm
Southwoods Ave., Manila
Southwood Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 2,592,000.00

UCPB - CONDOTEL
L.A 182.86sqm
Southwoods Villa, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price P 4,773,168.00

UCPB - RESORT BLDG
L.A 1,238sqm w/ POOL
Villa Ramirez Subd.,
Bo. Tabon, Kawit
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,190,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 244sqm
Astro ready Mix, Palico, Imus
Minimum Bid Price P 461,160.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 1024sqm
Astro Ready Mix, Palico, Imus
Minimum Bid Price P 1,198,080.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A 4,999sqm
Macana Business Center,
Bo. Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price P 40,491,900.00

UCPB - DUPLEX
L.A 80sqm, F.A 27sqm
Molino Park Homes, Dasmarinas
Minimum Bid Price. P 637,590.00

UCPB - CONDOTEL/RESORT
F.A 71sqm
Vista De Loro Heights,
Puerto Azul
Minimum Bid Price P 1,870,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 615sqm
Manila Southwoods, Cabilang
Baybay, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,935,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 144sqm, F.A 80sqm
Via Velana St. Milano Citta Italiana,
Mambog
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,500,000.00

UCPB - INDSL LOT
L.A 7,079sqm
Bo. Nog 4, Bacoor
Minimum Bid Price. P 6,585,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 486sqm
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price. P 2,430,000.00

BIÑAN/ SAN PEDRO & STA. ROSA

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 150sqm
Town & Country Southville Binan
Minimum Bid Price P 292,500.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 209sqm
Town & Country Southville Binan
Minimum Bid Price P 428,450.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 782sqm (2-storey)
Bo. Pooc, Sta. Rosa
Minimum Bid Price. P 2,057,753.89

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 142sqm, F.A 74sqm
Rosewood, La Marea Hills
Minimum Bid Price P 1,520,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 195sqm, F.A 84sqm
Village, San Jose Sta. Rosa
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,100,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 155sqm, F.A 95sqm
Rosal St. El Vinda Village Phase I
Minimum Bid Price P 835,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 150sqm, F.A 106sqm
Aurora Ave. Aurora Height Subd.
Minimum Bid Price. P 825,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A 150sqm
Via Venezia cor. Via Verona St.
Romaville Subd.
Minimum Bid Price: P 525,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 370sqm, F.A 164sqm
Maharlika St. United San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price P 2,700,000.00

TAGAYTAY CITY

UCPB - CONDO UNIT
F.A. 160.25sqm
Unit 128 Leighton Garden Condo
Minimum Bid Price. P 3,380,000.00

UCPB - VACANT LOT
L.A. 11,572sqm
Bo. Maharlika East, Tagaytay
Minimum Bid Price: P
18,900,000.00

LAGUNA

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 480sqm
Cairaya Lake Resort Subd. Phase II, Bo. Lewin
Minimum Bid Price: P 250,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 200 sqm
Along Road Lot 6, Marymount
Village, Phase 3
Minimum Bid Price P 2,038,000.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,440sqm
Diversion Rd. Grand Riviera Subd,
Bulihan Sur
Minimum Bid Price P
14,750,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300sqm
Diversion Rd. Bulihan Sur, Pila
Minimum Bid Price. P 9,600,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300sqm
Magnolia cor. Ilang-Ilang Street
Villa Adelina III
Minimum Bid Price: P 621,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,982 sqm
Conrado Street, Manno Subd., San Lucas.
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,225,000.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,548sqm
National Hi-way Banca-banca
Victoria
Minimum Bid Price P 3,250,000.00

UCPB - COMML LOT
L.A. 27,853sqm
Maharlika Hi-way, Brgy. San Benito
Minimum Bid Price. P
36,308,949.95

UCPB - COMML BLDG
L.A 335sqm
National R., Adelina Agri-vill, Bo. Of Banca-banca
Minimum Bid Price. P 5,960,000.00

UCPB - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 2,000 sqm
Within Brgy. Bocal, Calamba City
Minimum Bid Price P 4,600,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 271sqm
Along Rd. Lot 7 & 9 Richwood Park Village
Minimum Bid Price P 439,020.00

UCPB - RESORT BLDG
L.A. 300sqm
Mana Makiling Villa, Pansol
Calamba
Minimum Bid Price P 4,000,000.00

UCPB - RSDL LOT
L.A. 121sqm
Magnolia St. Villa Adelina III,
Bulilan
Minimum Bid Price: P 495,000.00

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Oil, earnings to weigh on Wall St. stocks

NEW YORK—A new reporting period for company earnings kicks into gear this week, giving investors a bit of hard data to chew on, and markets could be volatile if the price of crude oil stays north of $50 a barrel.

US President George W. Bush and Sen. John Kerry also hold the second of three debates, but if the first is any indication—with no clear winner or major stumble—they are unlikely to move markets, market analysts and traders say.

"The most important factors driving this market continue to be the price of oil, and as we approach earnings for the third quarter. Obviously that's going to be a very key driver," said Keith Keenan, vice president of institutional trading at brokerage Wall Street Access.

Aluminum producer Alcoa Inc., traditionally the first in line at the beginning of the quarterly earnings season, reports on Thursday and industrial conglomerate General Electric Co. on Friday.

Standard & Poor's expects earnings to grow 13.9 percent in the third quarter, a healthy rate but off the record pace of the first half of the year when growth exceeded 20 percent.

Ed Yardeni, chief investment strategist at Oak Associates Ltd. in Akron, Ohio, with more than $8 billion under management, said he believes stocks will settle into a historical trend of 7 percent earnings growth.

Corporate earnings news could lift the market out of its sluggishness, another analyst said.

"If we have another solid earnings season, like we did for the second quarter, maybe that will give the market some motivation to post some gains," said Weston Boone, vice president of listed trading at Legg Mason Wood Walker. *Reuters*

Gov't eyes VAT on bus, jeepney operators

From page B1

for the operation of his or her business. The input credits can be deducted from the amount of VAT he or she has to pay, or passed on to customers.

"This is an alternative measure we are studying because the transport industry might seek for consideration when the time comes that they will have to pay for higher cost of petroleum because of the VAT," Tan told reporters.

She said, however, that the DOF has not yet made definite its plan to make the transport industry shift from percentage tax to VAT as it was still weighing available options. Tan said another option could be to retain the transport industry under the percentage tax system, and just allow public utility operators to include VAT on petroleum as part of expenses that are deductible from their taxable income.

The plan to impose VAT on petroleum products comes with the move of the DOF to trim the number of exempt products and services. The DOF said the "too many" VAT exemptions in the country were the reason the VAT system has not been efficient in generating substantial revenue for the government.

Tan explained that exemptions distorted the tax trail of the VAT system, which is designed to have a wider tax base.

Government estimates say that the Philippines has one of the lowest levels of VAT collection efficiency in Asia. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies noted that in 2002, the effective VAT rate should have been about 4.2 percent of sales. The country's gross domestic product stood at P4.02 trillion that year. With that amount of GDP and effective VAT rate, the government should have collected P168.97 billion from VAT. But VAT collections only stood at P66 billion or only 1.6 percent of GDP. *Michelle V. Remo*

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- Natural/Herbal/Organic Food Products
- BFAD/DOH Approved Medicines Consumer Health Care
- Wellness/Lifestyle Products
- Exercise/Fitness and Healthy Living
- Cosmetics, Skin, Hair, and Personal Care Products
- HMO, Medical Insurance, Hospitals, & Medical Clinic
- Medical/Sports Equipment & Hardware
- Alternative Medicine
- Alternative Medicine Practices

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- A showcase of different health, wellness, & beauty products by over 60 companies.
- Free lectures by medical/health experts
- Free demonstration on health exercises
- Free consultations/clinics by practitioners such as iridology, reflexology, facial services, bone density test, eye check-up, etc.
- Hands-on demonstration on different products and services.
- Business opportunity seminars by leading health companies.
- Product launching and food tasting

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NATURE'S CALL HEEDED

In response to the urgent need to conserve Philippine butterflies thru the creation of sanctuaries and houses serving as gene bank, Island Cove Resort & Leisure Park recently launched The Butterfly Farm last Sept. 4, 2004. Seen in the photo proudly posing for the photographer are Island Cove's general manager, Norlinda Agustin and guest of honor Congressman Boying Remulla, Congressman of the 3rd District of Cavite.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
TONDO MEDICAL CENTER
Balut, Tondo, Manila

TMC – BID & AWARD COMMITTEE
INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Tondo Medical Center hereby invites sealed written bid for the procurement and delivery of various Drugs/Medicine, X-ray, Dental Supplies and Laboratory reagents / Food Stuff for the First Semester Cy 2005.

Interested applicants must submit pre-qualifications / supporting documents, payment of non-refundable fee for Drug/Medicine Php 600.00 Medical/Surgical supply, Dental & Laboratory reagent Php 600.00 and Food Stuff Php 500. Bidding documents can be secured at the Secretariat Tondo Medical Center at the Supply Office, Balut, Tondo, Manila.

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

	Issuance of Bids	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission of Bids	Opening of Bids
Drugs & Medicine	Oct. 5-25, 2004	Oct. 26, 2004	Nov. 17, 2004	Nov. 17, 2004
Medical/Surgical Supplies, X-ray Dental & Laboratory Reagent	Oct. 5-25, 2004	Oct. 27, 2004	Nov. 18, 2004	Nov. 18, 2004
Food Stuff	Oct. 4-22, 2004	Oct. 25, 2004	Nov. 15, 2004	Nov. 15, 2004

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, bid evaluation an award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

All activities shall be held at Tondo Medical Center, Conference Room, Balut, Tondo Manila unless announced otherwise.

For Further details, please contact Secretariat Tondo Medical Center at Telephone No. 251-84-21 – 23.

TONDO MEDICAL CENTER, BAC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, TO ANNUL THE BIDDING PROCESS, REJECT ALL BIDS AT ANYTIME PRIOR TO THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT, WITHOUT THEREBY INCURRING ANY LIABILITY TO THE AFFECTED BIDDERS OR ANY OBLIGATION TO INFORM THE AFFECTED BIDDER/BIDDERS ON THE REASONS FOR DOING SO TMC-BAC ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY BIDS NOR DEEM IT GUARANTEED THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) VICTOR J. DELA CRUZ, MD, CESO IV
Medical Center Chief II

ERRATUM:
Last September 27, 2004, TMC-BAC inadvertently issued an Invitation to Bid for Janitorial Services and Security Services for CY 2005. The Janitorial and Security Services should not have been included in that publication.
TMC-BAC

(PDI – September 27 & October 4, 2004)

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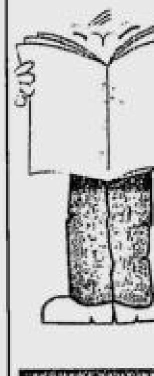

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bid Ref. No. PB-JS-BCFTPP-Proc04-01

The Local Bids and Awards Committee (Local BAC) and HR/Admin. Procurement, NPC-BCFTPP with office address at NPC, BCFTPP Complex, Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas invite interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

DATE OF BIDDING: October 28, 2004 (10:00 AM)

P.R. NO.	ITEM/DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT DURATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT TO BE BID
2BCF04-459	SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS/ EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND SUPERVISION OF JOBS RELATED TO JANITORIAL AND SANITATION AND OTHER RELATED UTILITY SERVICES OPERATIONS	Two (2) years	P23,700,000.00

Complete sets of Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Office, NPC-BCFTPP Complex, Brgy. San Rafael, Calaca, Batangas upon submission and presentation of the original DTI or SEC registration and payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 from Monday-Friday at 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Bids will be received at the NPC-BCFTPP, Calaca Science Centrum, on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that Certification is still valid.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted at the NPC-BCFTPP, Calaca Science Centrum on October 15, 2004 at 10:00 AM followed by a Site Inspection of the project.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The Local BAC, NPC-BCFTPP, reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to cancel the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the ground(s) for NPC's action.

Batangas Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant's other requirements are posted at the DBM Website: **www.procurementservice.org.**

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(PDI – Oct. 4 & 11, 2004)

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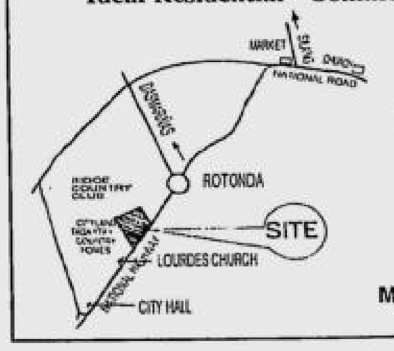

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Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of MMLDC, INC. (the "Corporation") which shortened the term of its corporate existence to end on October 15, 2004 and thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date, has been approved by its Board of Directors and shareholders at duly constituted meetings both held on September 1, 2004.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same at the Corporation's principal place of business located at the 8/F Lopez Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

GIL S. SAN DIEGO
Corporate Secretary

(PDI – September 20, 27 & October 4, 2004)

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OFFICE OF THE BAC CHAIRMAN
Second Agrarian Reform Communities
Development Project

October 4, 2004
World Bank/IBRD Loan No. 7152-PH

INVITATION TO BID

(ITB)

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the ARCDPII and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the following contracts located at Barangay Cabaywa, Municipality of Asuncion, Province of Davao del Norte. The Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as define in the Guideline: Procurement under IBRD Loan and IDA Credits.

The Municipality of Asuncion, Province of Davao del Norte and implementing partner of the DAR for ARCDPII invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the Construction of Cabaywa MPC under Contract Number RIMPC 04 040 01 CAB-DN.

Project Duration : 80 Calendar Days
Bidding Documents : PHP 3,500.00
Minimum Bid Security : PHP 20,000.00
Bid Closing Date : November 4, 2004 Time 1:00 PM

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:

Item No.	Scope of Works	Quantity	Unit
1.A	Excavation	78.30	cu.m.
1.B	Backfill	200.00	cu.m.
II	Concrete Works, Class "A"	49.96	cu.m.
III	Masonry Works	247.68	cu.m.
IV	Forms and Scaffoldings	L.S.	
V	Doors and Windows	41.06	sq.m.
VI	Electrical Works	L. S.	
VII	Plumbing Works	L. S.	
VIII	Truss and Roof Framing	203.40	sq.m.
IX	Solar Dryers	448.00	sq.m.

Minimum Equipments Required

Portable one bagger concrete mixer (1 unit) owned; concrete vibrator (1unit) owned vibratory plate compactor (1unit) owned and one (1) set Welding machine, owned.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders at the BAC, Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Asuncion, Province of Davao del Norte starting **October 5, 2004** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP 3,500.00 for each set. Pre-bid conference will be held in the same address on **October 22, 2004** at 9:00 AM.

Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security deposit of PHP20,000.00 in the form of, **Cash, Certified Check, Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee**, on a free convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Asuncion, Province of Davao del Norte on or before the Bid closing date on **November 4, 2004** at 1:00 PM at which time the Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

The LGU-BAC ARCDPII of Asuncion, Davao del Norte reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expenses that they may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept the **lowest evaluated, responsive and complying bid**.

(Sgd.) SHIRLY O. RAMONIDA
Chairman LGU-BAC-ARCDPII

(PDI Oct 4 2004)

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So that we shall also tread the path to righteousness
And be exalted to enter the Kingdom of the Lord."

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whose legacy of wholehearted devotion to the Holy Mother Church, to the Country, to the Order of the Knights of Columbus, to brother knights and their families, and to all whose lives he had enriched, exemplifies the virtues of a true Knight, worthy of emulation by all.

Bro. Larry peacefully joined our Lord on October 1, 2004. His body lies at Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City. Holy Mass on October 5, 2004 will be at 7:00 a.m. in Mt. Carmel Church to be followed by cremation in Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City at 9:00 a.m.

We urge brother knights to offer holy mass for the repose of his soul.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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Peacefully joined our Lord and his wife Rufina
on October 2, 2004 at the age of 69.

He shall be missed by his children **Chet, Chicky, Junette** and **Peaches**; grandchildren **Mayo, Mikko, Monique** and relatives.

His remains lie in state at Premiere Suite 1, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

The family is requesting for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be announced later.

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and daughter **MARY ANNE** request relatives,
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praying for the eternal repose of Her Soul.

A Mass will be offered tomorrow,
Tuesday October 05 on her resting place at the
Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila
at 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon.
Very Reverend Salvador Pablo, SDB,
Rector of Don Bosco,
Makati City, is the main celebrant.

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People's PC program launched

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has launched the "People's PC" program that, in partnership with Intel Corp., seeks to offer affordable personal computers to Filipinos.

Commission on Information and Communications Technology chair Virgilio Peña and Intel Microelectronics Philippines head Ricky Banaag signed a memorandum of understanding Wednesday last week.

Peña said the deal was still "exploratory" but stressed this is part of the CICT's program to increase PC penetration in the country by offering more affordable computers to Filipinos.

"Our target price point is P15,000. But Intel is still negotiating with various suppliers. We have not determined the final price yet," Peña said in a telephone interview.

Peña noted that both CICT and Intel are also working on the channels of distribution of the people's PC.

"We have not yet established the distribution model," he added.

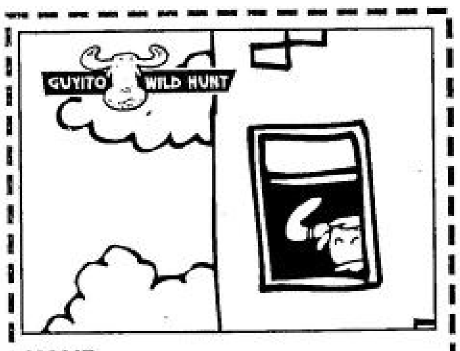
In a briefing, Banaag said Intel is working with Philippine resellers in the distribution of the People's PC.

Paul Otellini, president and chief operating officer of Intel Corp. who visited Manila Wednesday, told reporters that Intel has done similar initiatives in at least 15 countries including Thailand.

"Taking advantage of information technology and the Internet will help Filipinos acquire the knowledge and skills that are highly valued in today's workplace," Otellini said.

In a separate interview, newly appointed CICT Commissioner Tim Diaz de Rivera said the People's PC will likely cost between P16,000 and P17,000. However, this cost will translate to a "bare" system, meaning it would have no operating system and software.

Rivera said the National Computer Center is working with government financial institutions on possible financing schemes for government employees who might want to avail of the People's PC program.



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Blame operators, not police over cellular phone thefts

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

MOBILE phone operators and not the police should be held responsible for the increasing cases of phone thefts in the country, according to the founder of an organization of Filipinos advocating the rights of cell phone theft victims.

Jun Lozada, executive director and founder of the Organisasyon ng mga Galit sa Magnanakaw (OGSM), said mobile phone operators are in a position to solve this problem since they control the network where all cell phones, including stolen ones, operate on.

Lozada revealed, for instance, that Asian operator Hutchinson has made headways into preventing cell phone theft in the United Kingdom due to pressures from victims and lawmakers.

Lozada told Infotech that local mobile phone operators are turning a blind eye on the cell phone theft problem since they have more to lose by disallowing stolen phones from being used in their networks.

A former telecommunications executive, Lozada disclosed that a top executive of a mobile phone operator even admitted that "a stolen phone is another customer to operators."

During the first Senate hearing on cell phone theft held Friday, several lawmakers came close to scolding top police officials for their lack of information and even conflicting statistics on this emerging crime.

Lozada who was at the hearing defended the police, stressing that "if there is any group that can do something about this, it's the mobile phone companies, not the police."

Lozada said phone theft was an "opportunistic" crime.

In an earlier report, mobile phone operators said that phone theft is a police matter. But they said that they are also helping solve the problem through the "blacklisting" system being implemented by the National Telecommunications Commission.

Blacklisting involves blocking the IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identification) from a mobile phone network. The IMEI is a 15-digit code assigned to every handset that is manufactured.

A subscriber can check his or her IMEI by keying in *#06#.

NTC encourages phone theft victims to keep their IMEIs safe in case their phones are lost or stolen.

As of September 2004, NTC has blocked a total of 9,247 IMEIs. Each IMEI represents a reported case of stolen or lost cell phone.

In 2002, NTC figures showed a total of 25,492 cases of stolen or lost phones, while in 2003 the figure declined to 16,954.

Police figures, however, show a different picture.

Based on a Philippine National Police National Street Crime Environment briefing, cell phone snatching cases represented 31 percent of the total number of robbery cases recorded during the months covering March to August 2004.

Police Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay, who presented the police figures at the Senate hearing, said the total number of cell phone theft numbered 310 from March to August 2003 and 248 during the same period last year.

Police Chief Supt. Prospero Noble presented a different picture.

Noble said the total number of phone thefts from January to August this year was 332.

The discrepancy in police figures shocked lawmakers who then started grilling them during the Senate hearing for their lack of information and coordination.

Lozada said the Senate can push a measure similar to the United Kingdom laws that were passed after their government realized the extent of the phone theft crime.

Based on OGSM's estimate, only 5 percent of the victims reported losing their mobile phones to thieves. He said that given 25,000 cases of stolen or lost cell phones reported to the NTC, about half a million phones are lost or stolen every year.

In the UK, government estimates 700,000 phones are lost or stolen annually.

The NTC issued last month a directive requiring all phone repair shops, as well as phone dealers, to register with the regulatory body. This move was intended to stop unscrupulous phone repair shops and dealers from the supposed practice of tampering with stolen phones to go around the blacklisting system of the NTC.

Lozada said the current blacklisting system has several technical loopholes that allow stolen handsets to be recycled back to the market.

NTC Chair Ronald Solis said during the hearing that software technology used to tamper with IMEIs of handsets is readily available on the Internet.

Solis, however, stressed that the NTC's recent directive hopes to abate the practice of tampering with IMEIs.

Meanwhile, cellular operators Smart Communications and Globe Telecom reacted to Lozada's statements.

"We don't want to be engaged in this blaming game. We're cooperating. It is as if we're not willing to cooperate," said Ramon Isberto, head of public affairs of Smart. "This is a difficult problem and there is no one big solution. There are a variety of measures, such as educating people on avoiding becoming victims."

Isberto said "we have to work together" within the bounds of the law.

"We cannot unilaterally block stolen phones," he said. "How would we know if a person is using a stolen phone or not?"

Froilan Castelo, assistant vice president for corporate and regulatory affairs of Globe, added: "We alone could not provide the solution to the problem. We can only do as much."

Castelo reiterated that Globe is currently cooperating with the NTC by blocking a stolen cell phone number 24 hours after it is reported stolen or lost. He also noted that Globe is not making money out of the stolen handsets.

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Controversy mars India's 3G spectrum allocation

By Leo Magno

THE GLOBAL association of GSM operators and manufacturers is facing a second world war against supporters of the CDMA platform for mobile phones. This time, however, the battle is being fought in India.

Supporters of the GSM (Global System for Mobile communications) and CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) incompatible mobile platforms have been fighting the war for dominance since the early '90s. CDMA is still being used in the North and South America and Asia (mostly in South Korea) while GSM, the dominant platform of the two, has been a standard in Europe and Asia. In the Philippines, the now-defunct Piltel used to offer CDMA service, but eventually lost to GSM which is now being used by all three Philippine operators.

The battle for global dominance was renewed with a controversial proposal from Indian telecommunications regulators. That proposal involves the allocation of India's 1850MHz to 1910MHz band for CDMA uplink, with the 1930MHz to 1990MHz band for CDMA downlink.

The problem is, the International Telecommunications Union, the United Nations of telecommunications policies, has previously reserved way back in 1992 the 1920MHz to 1980MHz band for 3G uplink, with the 2210MHz to 2170MHz band for 3G downlink. No problem with the latter, but the former—the 1900 spectrum—clashes with the CDMA downlink in India's new proposal.

The ITU allocation of the 3G spectrum applies worldwide. If government regulators release the 1900 spectrum in favor of CDMA, India will not be able to enjoy 3G services on the same plain as the rest of the world.

This goes to show that communications frequencies—like real estate and domain names—have become valuable assets.

India is a critical market for both telecommunications operators and equipment manufacturers. It is the second most populated country in the world next to China. It is also critical for both CDMA and GSM operators. In 2004, India's GSM operators have connected six million new users or 80 percent of all new mobile subscribers and 55 percent of all new telephone connections. Should the 1900MHz band be given to CDMA, it would block the internationally allocated upward path of GSM and 3GSM operators to 3G.

That's why Sunil Mittal, CEO of India's GSM-based Bharti Telecom, is mad.

"Clearly there is pressure once again coming from CDMA operators," said the Bharti CEO. Bharti is India's leading Telecom conglomerate.

"They are attacking a slice of the spectrum. CDMA lobbyists are fighting for that. Instead of getting the 1800 spectrum, they're pressing for a band in the 3G spectrum. This is not about technology. This is about politics," Mittal said, speaking at the recently concluded 3GSM Congress.

Bharti has aired its complaint to the GSM Association (GSMA), a global GSM trade association composed of 667 operator members and 140 associate members in 209 countries. Overall, the GSMA members account for 1.15 billion GSM subscribers or one-sixth of the world population.

The GSMA responded by sending last Monday an open letter criticizing the new proposal of Indian telecom regulators.

"They're disregarding the ITU," said GSMA chair Craig Ehrlich. "This proposal is a direct attack on all that the ITU has achieved and could set a precedent."

Japan, which before had been an isolated cellular communications island, has also adopted the ITU 3G allocation. South Korea, a CDMA user, also abided by the ITU decision. The United States, however, remains the last biggest holdout for CDMA which is still 2G technology.

Asked if there could have been connivance in the drafting of the new Indian proposal in favor of CDMA, Ehrlich said: "The bottomline is that it was a decision marked by political and business interests."

"Government can create winners and losers with the regulatory decisions it makes. India's regulators were up and down. We want a regulation that's consistent over a long period of time," said Ehrlich.

Should India decide to push through with its decision, 3G on the 1900MHz spectrum will still be rolled out elsewhere in the world but not in India. That decision may also sway others to follow India's lead and, in the future, may continue disregarding the ITU, resulting in chaotic frequency allocation.

People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

More companies, schools, clubs in Auto Review 10K Run

MORE than 1,500 runners from companies, schools and running clubs have so far confirmed their participation in the 1st Auto Review 10K Run for Road Safety and Courtesy on Oct. 10, 6 a.m. at the CCP Complex in Pasay City.

Aside from Asahi Glass Corp, Caltex and Accel, more companies such as Total, General Motors, Toyota Motor Philippines, Isuzu Philippines Corp, Ford Group Philippines, Mazda Philippines, Mitsubishi Motors, Nissan Motor Philippines, Viking Cars Inc (Volvo), Red Bull, Today and Manila Bulletin are likewise supporting the advocacy event that aims to promote mass-based awareness on road safety.

Runners from Asahi Glass, Isuzu, Automobile Association of the Philippines, Toyota, Ford and Mitsubishi together with the University of Makati, PSBA-QC, De La Salle, Fort Bonifacio High School and Manila Plus, Mariners Gym, St. Pancratius and Valenzuela running clubs are participating in the 10-km, 5-km and 3-km distances that will start and finish at the CCP fronting Star City.

Registration is ongoing at 5 Agusan Street, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City with contact numbers 742-0283 or 742-3091, or log on to www.viaautoreview.com or e-mail autoreviewmail@yahoo.com

Entry forms are also available at the CCP Little Theatre Entrance, CCP Main Building, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City; Patafa office, RMSC, P. Ocampo Sr, Manila; and the MBC Office, Aliw Theatre, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

The entry fee is P150 for 10K and 5K and P75 for 3K (for 12 years old and below) and students. The top 10 runners in each category will receive glass trophies and gift packs. The top three placers will get additional cash prizes while the male and female champions in the 10-km event will bring home a Carryboy mountain bike each on top of the P7,500 cash prize.

The organizers will accept entries until October 7.

The 1st Auto Review 10K Run is endorsed by the World Health Organization Representative to the Philippines, Department of Education, Metro-Manila Development Authority, the Automobile Association of the Philippines, Campi, MDPPA and the Society of Philippine Motoring Journalists.

GROOVE YOUR WAY TO VICTORY

See them move and watch them groove as high school teens from all over Metro Manila dance their way to the top in the first-ever Teen Synergy Dance Competition. All female high school students are encouraged to join this high-energy event where artistry, creativity and coordination are pushed to the limits. Bearing the theme 'fashionably fun', teams of 8 to 10 members must compose a dance routine of 3 to 4 minutes. Only 30 teams will be selected to compete in the elimination rounds. P100,000 in cash plus gift certificates await the grand prize winner. A percentage of all cash prizes will go to the teams' respective schools. The first elimination round will be on Oct. 16 in Robinsons Galleria. To join, just call Mitzi Magdaparan at 927-9112. Shown are the girls of Jose Rizal University, one of many teams that have signed up for the dance competition made possible by Crissa.

Epson unveils new, sleek home printer

EPSON Philippines Corp, the country's leader in digital imaging solutions, recently unveiled the Epson Stylus C45-an affordable, all-purpose color inkjet printer that delivers razor-sharp copies of text documents and hassle-free, picture perfect photos.

Aside from its sleek and attractive design, the new Epson Stylus C45 also boasts of an astounding 2880 dpi resolution and may be considered as the ideal home printer for the family that's perfect for your letters and office reports, homework and university assignments, as well as web downloads and e-mails. What's more, its cubist-inspired chassis also comes with a built-in adaptor and retractable paper tray.

Moreover, the Epson Stylus C45, which is equally amazing for printing both photos and document printouts, also delivers with uncompromising speed at 12 ppm for black text and up to 5.4 ppm for color text.

To achieve that picture-perfect printout of high-quality glossy photos that are perfectly matched, the Epson Stylus C45 uses a 6-picoliter ink drop size and an optimized print resolution of up to 2880x720 dpi. Epson Stylus C45 also uses Epson's industry-leading Micro-Piezo printhead and PerfectPicture Imaging system that enables the new printer to produce clear, crisp black text and outstanding color graphics. For a truly vivid photo printout, the revolutionary Epson Stylus C45 may also be optimized to reproduce superb, glossy prints using Epson's Premium Glossy Photo Paper.

Epson's Preferred Color Technology, which specifies how colors will be produced on the printer, also helps to ensure vivid color expressions so your photo printouts appear brilliant with more attractive colors. The effect is particularly outstanding when printed on Epson's now affordable Premium Glossy Photo Paper that's available in 4R (10x15 cm) and A4 sizes.

For fun, ease of use and cost savings, the Epson Stylus C45 also offers an array of media support in its driver. Using PhotoEnhance mode, effects like monochrome, sepia and parchment printing becomes easy. The new printer also comes pre-loaded with a print preview, N-up printing and poster printing functions, plus improved digital camera correction function ideal for removing "noises" from digicam images.

It also comes packed with an easy-to-use photo utility Epson PhotoQuicker 3.5, which can help transform low-res digicam images from your mobile phone into fun prints like photo stickers. Your photos automatically get resized for its intended use. Again using PhotoEnhance mode, you can also frame photos with the fun and exciting Print Image Framer, or make images look similar to conventional silver halide prints. Red-eye reduction function, on the other hand, also adds to its usability.

If you think you've heard enough, here's more: a new convenient utility that appears as a button in your Internet Explorer browser, Epson Web-to-Page Toolbar, helps optimize web page settings to conform to the required size and ensures that no text or image is cropped in the final copy. Finally, the Epson Stylus C45 also has a "black ink save mode" that offers a composite black option-made by mixing cyan, magenta and yellow inks-when the black ink is running low. So now you don't have to worry about running out on black ink for that urgent report, letter or homework you're rushing for tomorrow.

The Epson Stylus C45 is compatible with Windows 98, ME, 2000 and XP, supports a USB interface and is being retailed at a suggested price of P2,495. It uses Intellidge ink cartridges that help you monitor ink levels more accurately and supports both Print Image Matching II and Exif 2.21 standards, making it an ideal companion for your digital camera-and your homes, too.

BDO CASH CARD WINS ASIAN BANKER AWARD

Banco de Oro's BDO Cash Card won the Asian Banker Award, an international recognition given to banks for their outstanding products and services. Asian Banker managing director Emmanuel Daniel awarded BDO chair Teresita Sy and bank president Nestor Tan the Product Excellence in Retail Finance Services for the exceptional performance of the BDO Cash Card. The citation recognizes the pursuit of excellence among financial institutions in the Asian region. BDO Cash Card was launched December 2002, and within a year earned wide market acceptance from users. The cash card is a reloadable prepaid, multi-purpose, electronic debit card not linked to any deposit account. Customers are guaranteed low-cost, secure and convenient electronic mode of payment empowering both corporate and retail customers.

GROUP ARTISTS OF TAYTAY

The Junior Group Artists of Taytay (Jr. GAT) is holding an art exhibit titled 'Obra ko 'to!' until Oct. 30 at the Pasig Museum, Pasig City. The exhibit shows different works of art such as paintings, sculptures, photography and portraiture from participating artists Alvin Anchinges, Roger Baligaya, George Bas, Joel Cruz, Ron Dasal, Danny Doce, Neslon Fortaleza, Dion Edwin Francisco, Lope Francisco, Darwin Guevarra, Reggie Lim, Hari Martin Lualhati, Jonalyn Villar-Montero, Joel Montero, Jonjon Magalona, John Perry Pellejera, Christopher Pellejera, Warren Regaspi, Lin Marie Reyes, James Sanorjo, Anthony Vargas, Bryan Villanueva, Ferdie Villanueva, Randy Vitales, and Paula Zapanta. For more information, call Jr. GAT at 284-1445 or 0919-2613762 and look for Jona or Joel or at 0927-5527804 and look for Bryan.

42 Years of Protecting
the Welfare of the Filipino Consumer
15TH A NATIONAL
CONS AWARDS
Aug
Pavilion

RECOGNITION FOR ROBBY RABBIT, CHARACTERS UNLIMITED

At the recently held 15th Annual National Consumer Awards (Anca), Robby Rabbit was recognized as an Outstanding Cartoon Character Brand, while the recognition of Outstanding Retailer of International Cartoon Character Consumer Products was given to Characters Unlimited. Steven L. Ching and Carolina D. Ching accepted the awards during the awarding ceremony Aug. 27 at Le Pavilion, Roxas Boulevard. The Robby Rabbit mascot also personally graced the ceremony. Robby Rabbit is a Filipino-made cartoon character that has proven its competence through the new, high-quality designs of consumer products carried under its brand. The awards were given by the Consumers' Union of the Philippines (CUP) under the leadership of lawyer Quirino Marquinez.

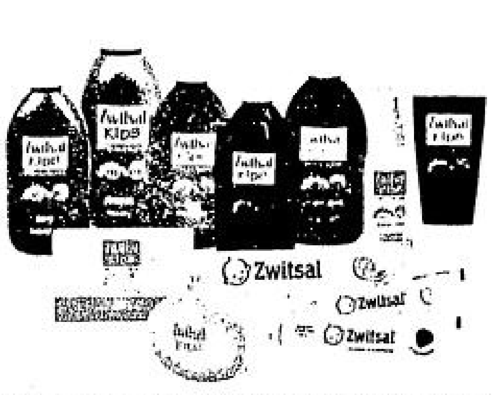
ProductFILES

Kids never outgrow their Zwitsal Kids

A CHILD'S skin needs special care and attention. Their skin is more delicate, prone to irritation and allergic reactions than that of adults. So when choosing a skin care line for your little one, mildness is the most important factor to consider.

But children outgrow their old baby skin products. When they reach the age of four, they are more active and need additional grooming aids to keep them fresh, clean and presentable all day. They also start forming their own preferences when it comes to their toiletries. If your child is used to the gentle, hypoallergenic and dermatologist-tested Zwitsal baby care line, there is no need to switch brands because you can trust Zwitsal Kids. They still offer the same hypoallergenic, pH-balanced and dermatologist-tested formula with fun fruity scents like Tutti-Frutti, Orange, Kiwi and Strawberry that add a playful element to their everyday grooming activities.

Bath-time is like playtime when you teach them to take a bath the way mommy does. Start with the no-tears Detangling Shampoo and follow-up with the Conditioner. Just as he comes out of the shower, splash on the Cologne to keep him fresh and sweet-smelling. Teach him proper tooth-brushing techniques with the Toothpaste for sweet-smelling breath. Dust with the Powder to keep him cool and fresh. Then after dressing him up in his cute little outfit, groom his hair with the



Styling Gel with conditioners that keep his hair in place and protect his hair from drying out.

Zwitsal Kids is available at Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines (formerly known as House of Sara Lee) and authorized Sara Lee dealers nationwide. For inquiries, call hotline 810-5402, or e-mail customer.relations@saraleedirectselling.ph.

POSO MULA SA PUSO
A CIVIC PROJECT OF
CHINESE FILIPINO BUSINESS CLUB

'POSO MULA SA PUSO'

In view of the celebration of the Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day, the 'Poso Mula sa Puso' project was launched by the Chinese-Filipino Business Club Inc with the cooperation of DZMM program 'Aksyon Ngayon'. The beneficial and charitable civic project involved the installation of deep well water facilities in remote barrio areas. Shown are the project organizers during the project inauguration at Batasan Hills, Quezon City (from left), Johnny Lee, CFBC president Rufino Koplo, DZMM 'Aksyon Ngayon' program anchor Kaye Dacer, Rep. Francis Joseph Escudero, Pacasio Ang and Steven Ching.

BUSINESS

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Maurice Arcache
Journalist/TV Host

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Landbank backs GSIS pensioners

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LAND Bank of the Philippines has agreed to continue servicing the banking needs of 215,000 government pensioners until Sept. 30 next year at the request of the Government Service Insurance System.

Landbank president Gary Teves said the GSIS had sent written requests dated Oct. 1 and Sept. 14 to extend the banking relationship, until the pension fund's electronic card payment system had been fully rolled out.

"We want to assure GSIS pensioners that Landbank is committed to ensuring their convenience and security and will continue to address their needs until Sept. 30, 2005, by which time their new eCard system should be fully implemented," Teves said in press statement.

Teves said Landbank had directed its 350 branches nationwide to continue servicing monthly pension payments of pensioners.

He said the bank had an extensive network covering all 79 provinces reaches employees of local government units, public school teachers and other government employees.

GSIS' shift to the eCard system earlier drew flak from some groups, largely because the e-banking contract was awarded to privately-held Union Bank of the Philippines.

TEVES

Some accused GSIS president Winston Garcia of favoring Unionbank because the private bank's majority owners, the Aboitiz family, also hailed from Cebu.

But GSIS explained that Unionbank was chosen over other banks, including Bank of the Philippine Islands, because it offered the best e-banking platform at the lowest minimum maintaining balance of P1 billion.

Unionbank, on the other hand, said it was able to offer the cheapest service because its information technology infrastructure had been in place for some time.

DBM wants special accounts revenue to go to general fund

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Budget and Management wants to place billions of pesos in revenue from so-called special accounts to the national government's general funds to help ease its budget deficit problem.

According to Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, the national government needs the flexibility to allocate revenue from special accounts—or funds that can only be appropriated for specific activities cited by special laws—for urgent and more vital expenditures, other than those specified by special laws.

She said the move would need legislation by Congress and the DBM was willing to push the bill on that proposal.

Department of Finance Undersecretary Nieves Osorio said the DOF supported the idea, given that the objectives of some of the special laws had already been met.

She said revenue from activities undertaken in fulfillment of the special laws should be used for other expenditure requirements of the government that were immediate.

There are so many special laws right now that have kept the government from using the revenue to fund the necessary expenditures, she said.

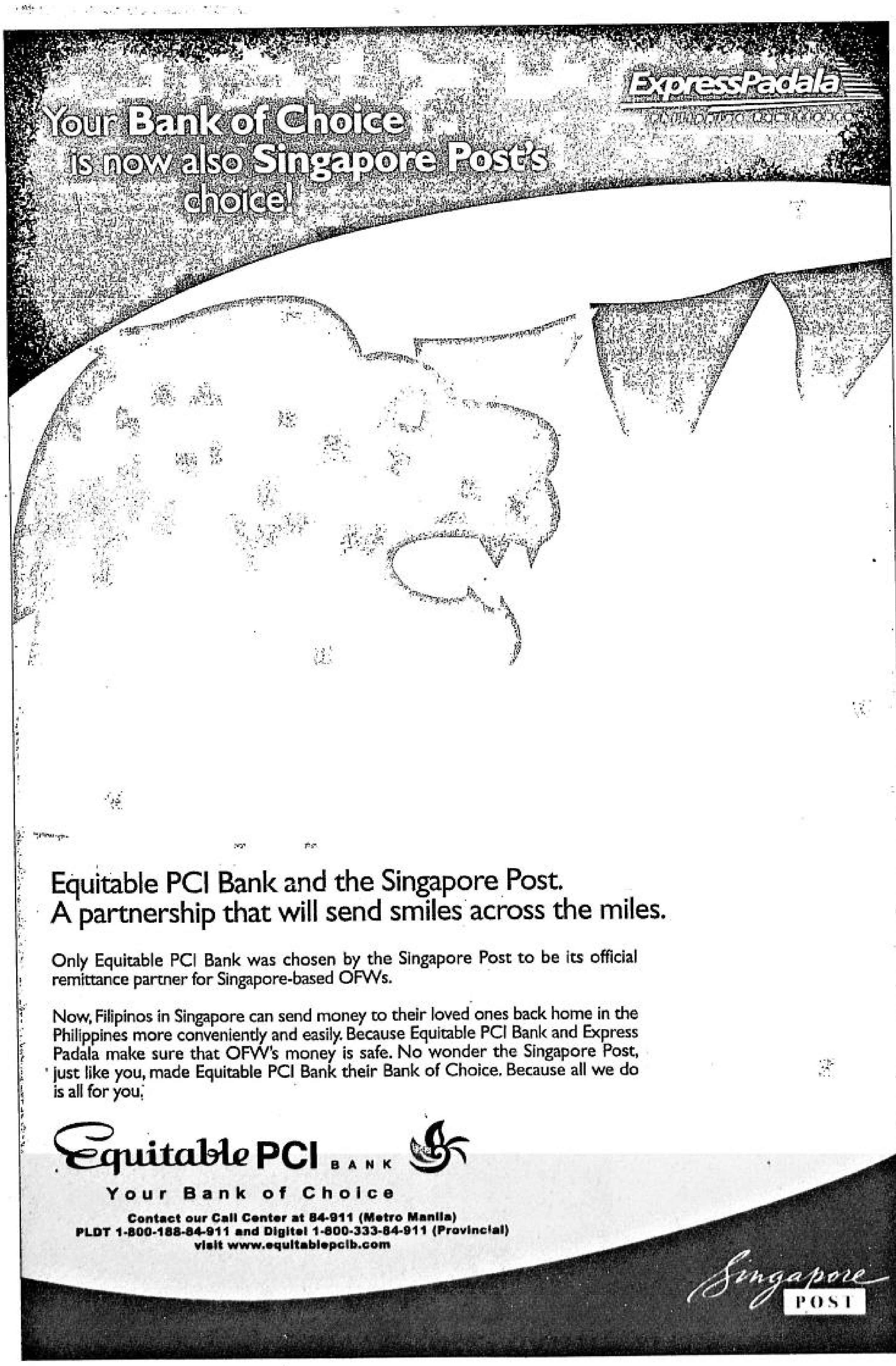
The special laws say that revenues from activities peculiar to a certain industry or sector should only be used only for a specific expenditure that are related to the said industry or sector.

For instance, the officials said, royalties earned by the government from contracts given to private companies to exploit the country's energy sources could only be used to fund activities that are related to the energy sector. Another example is the road users' tax, the revenue from which could only be used for road-related expenditures.

In a presentation during a Senate hearing on the proposed 2005 budget held last Friday, Boncodin said the national government expected P26.2 billion in revenue from special accounts. The amount can significantly help the government address its deficit problem if it has the flexibility to use the money for immediate expenditure requirements.

The government's budget deficit is expected to hit P197.8 billion by year-end. The government hopes to gradually trim it down, by increasing revenue collection and cutting expenditures. Government hopes to wipe out the deficit by the end of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term in 2010.

To help ease the deficit, the DBM has initiated austerity measures, such as suspension of foreign and local travels and purchase of motor vehicles, and strict compliance with government procurement rules.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Singapore POST

Filinvest to issue LTCPs worth ₱2B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GOTIANUN-LED Filinvest Land Inc. (FLI) will issue P2 billion worth of five-year corporate notes this month to refinance maturing debts in November, INQUIRER sources said.

Sources said the real estate developer was finalizing the debt offering and tapped First Metro Investment Corp. (FMIC) to head the group of banks that will manage the debt issue.

Analysts said they expected FLI to secure adequate refinancing on time.

"The only major hurdle to FLI is its P2 billion maturing LTCPs in November. After this loan maturity, the next major maturity comes in 2007 to the tune of P1.2 billion," said Alfred Dy, head of research at Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia.

FLI has P1.2 billion in convertible bonds falling due in February 2007 and P40.78 million worth of long-term promissory notes that will mature in March 2005.

FLI president Joseph Yap had said FLI could either refinance its debt via another LTCP issue or a combination of long-term bonds, loans and LTCPs.

Its P2 billion long-term commercial papers falling due in November carries an interest rate of 2 percent over the weighted average of the 91-day Treasury bill rate.

Showing it has enough resources to settle its obligations, FLI expects sales to increase by 50 percent this year to P3 billion, from the P2 billion generated last year.

FLI said it would set aside almost P1 billion this year for middle income and affordable housing projects, as well as leisure developments.

Among the projects slated for this year are the Blue Palm Estate in Sto. Tomas , Batangas, a middle-income house and lot development called the Manors and a leisure community called Laeuna de Taal in Talisay, Batangas.

Yap said the company also planned to further develop its 200-hectare residential property in Taytay, called the Manor Ridge.

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor
Margie Quimpo-Espino

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PRESIDENT ARROYO SPEAKS

Management skills: Major block to entrepreneurs

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

NOBODY has been paying them enough attention. Any help has largely been lip service.

Yet entrepreneurs have the potential to bring the country out of the economic rut it is in.

The Arroyo administration recognizes this potential and plans to unleash it through its Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (2004 to 2010).

One of the program's main objectives is to create 10 million jobs.

"We shall have supported three million entrepreneurs by giving them loans and helping them become good managers, thereby establishing a deep foundation for a broad middle class," the plan says.

Entrepreneurs are people who are self-employed and who create jobs.

At a recent dinner tendered by President Macapagal-Arroyo for four journalists (the author included), we asked what was the biggest stumbling block to entrepreneurship in this country.

Her reply was a quick, (lack of) "management skills."

Studies of entrepreneurs show that a lot of businesses close shop because of the lack of financial know-how, at the heart of which is cash flow management.

3 million more

President Arroyo said part of the three million entrepreneurs to be in place by 2010 were the government employees who will choose to retire under the government's retirement program.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said during the dinner that the government wanted to give them their retirement pay on their last day in office.

The government was already holding seminars to give the retirees options on what to do with their money—whether to set up a business or to invest it.

Another barrier to growing the ranks of entrepreneurs is the fact that most Filipino parents encourage their children to become professionals.

Only a handful coach their kids to become entrepreneurs.

This despite the SME sector being "the backbone of the Philippine economy," according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

SMEs comprise about 99.6 percent of all registered firms, employs 69.9 percent of the labor force, and accounts for 32 percent of the economy.

SMEs also help ensure a more equitable distribution of income, disperse economic activities to the countryside, and are a potent force in the war against poverty.

Republic Act No. 9178, or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) Act of 2002, states the Philippine government has set a policy to promote the establishment of BMBEs by providing various incentives and benefits to entrepreneurs.

In compliance with President Arroyo's directive, the DTI convened all the key players in SME development, including the pertinent government departments and agencies, and formulated the National SME Development Agenda.

But many items on the agenda have yet to be implemented.

Complaints

Entrepreneurs complain of bureaucracy, too much taxes and fees, lack of financing, an uneven playing field.

But the DTI claims targeted and collaborative programs in financing, marketing, training, product development/technology intervention, and advocacy have resulted in higher business performance for many SMEs as measured by their assets, employment and sales.

In its website, the DTI posts a question, "Why be an entrepreneur?"

It cites the following answer:

Entrepreneurship is a way of life. Being entrepreneurial means being able to identify, start, and maintain a viable and profitable business.

You may ask: "Why should I risk my resources in an unpredictable business when I could hold a stable job with a permanent tenure and an assurance of a regular monthly income, without any risk?"

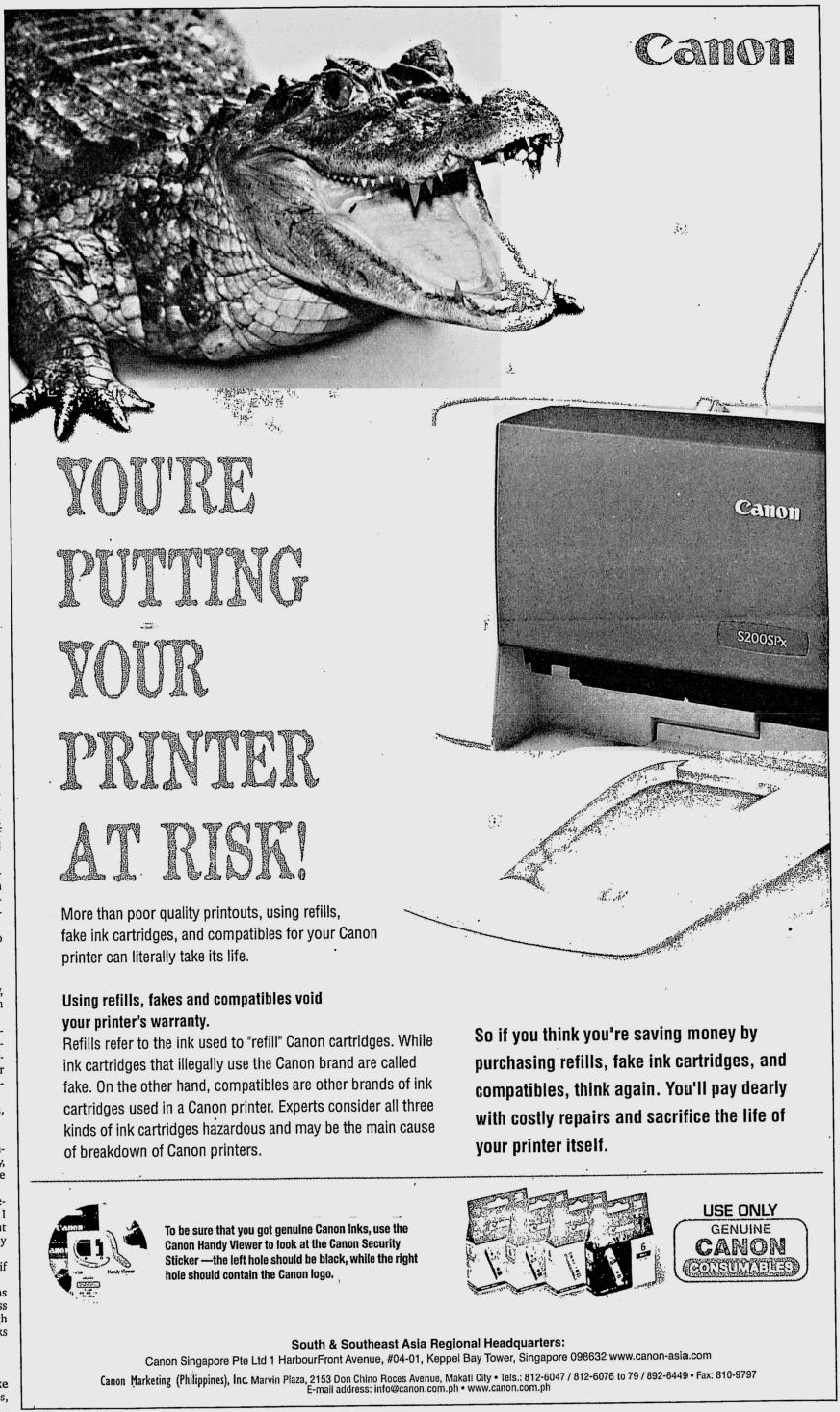
In other words, why be an entrepreneur if you can be an employee?

Entrepreneurship has its own rewards, as well as its risks. Having your own business has tremendous rewards, but be sure to weigh prospective returns against the potential risks and losses.

Rewards of entrepreneurship

Have unlimited opportunity to make money. When you have your own business,

MANAGEMENT/ B2



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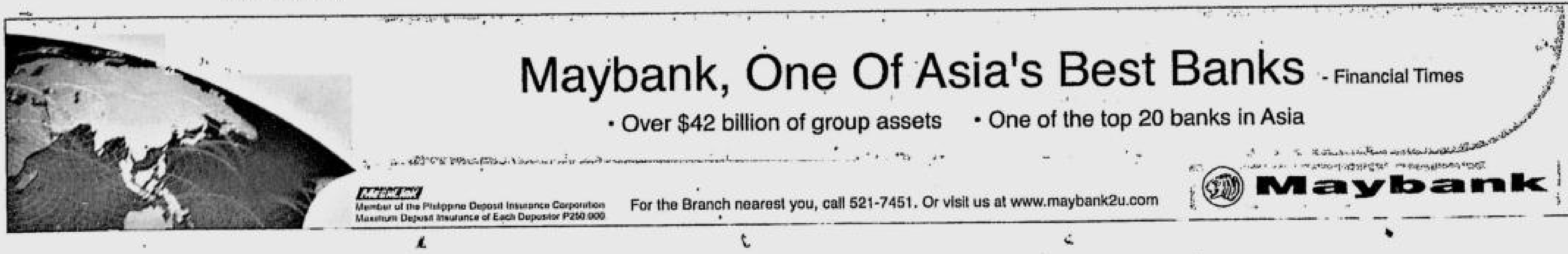

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Web retailers facing pre-holiday changes

SAN FRANCISCO—It's a great time to be an Internet shopper, but the same search technology that is transforming the Web into a bargain-hunter's paradise is putting the squeeze on online retailers doling out discounts and incentives to lure customers.

As the holiday shopping blitz approaches, generally accounting for about one-third of annual online sales, Internet retailers are under pressure to keep up with a fast-changing market.

One early forecast sees online holiday sales rising as much as 20 percent from last year's $18.5 billion. This year, retailers will be working even harder to earn a buck as the growing popularity of search-based comparison shopping engines like Shopping.com, BizRate.com and NexTag.com fuel an intense battle to deliver the lowest prices.

"We believe the heavy competition on the Web has created a new level of promotion, which is sure to suppress margins" for online retailers, Piper Jaffray analyst Safa Rashtchy said in a recent note.

Meanwhile, search providers and shopping comparison sites—the Web's new gatekeepers—stand to reap big rewards for connecting buyers with the best deals, he said.

Major Internet operators, who have worked hard to win the trust of consumers, are moving into the search space to protect their flanks and hopefully cash in on the new opportunity.

Amazon.com Inc.—known for its personalization technology that recommends products to individual users—has launched its own Web search unit called A9, offering a small, advertising-financed discount to users.

AOL recently overhauled its online shopping center to better compete with Yahoo Inc., Google Inc., which offer comparison-shopping tools based on Web search.

Banner year on the Web

A preliminary forecast from Ernst & Young, calls for a 15 percent to 20 percent rise in holiday online sales.

Jupiter Research expects 2004 online sales to jump 24 percent year-on-year to $65 billion, excluding travel, automotive, auctions and prescription drugs.

Annual online sales grew 28 percent in 2003, 33 percent in 2002 and 29 percent in 2001, Jupiter analyst Patti Freeman Evans said. She added that sector growth is seen cooling around 2006 under the weight of a maturing market and a bigger base for comparison.

Online and offline holiday retail sales were up 5.2 percent to $216.3 billion in 2003, according to the National Retail Federation. This year's growth is expected to again be in the single-digits on strong repeat performances from the apparel and consumer electronics sectors.

Online retailers have put the mishaps of Christmas past behind them: Who can forget the shipping snafus of the late 1990s that left children without toys on Christmas morning? But as they strive to lower prices, they also are under pressure to deliver ever-better selection and service to the growing number of shoppers accessing the Web via home broadband connections.

The coming holiday season will be Sears.com's first for selling apparel and home fashions. Its "Virtual Decorator" feature helps shoppers see how a bedspread, curtains or side table would look in a room that can be made to resemble the real thing at home.

Sears.com sister site Landsend.com is expanding the reach of its custom-fit tool from categories such as jeans, chinos and men's dress shirts to include its outdoorsy men's "Marinac" jacket, which can be cut to order, with extras such as an inside pocket for an MP3 player or underarm zippers for ventilation.

"You're constantly tweaking and upgrading. You're constantly adding more capacity," said Bill Bass, who oversees e-commerce for Sears, Roebuck and Co. and its Lands' End specialty clothing brand.

"We spend the entire year getting ready for Christmas," said Mark Vadon, chief executive of diamond engagement ring seller Blue Nile Inc., which has enhanced visualization tools in its "Build Your Own Ring" feature that allows users to search for diamonds and settings.

Patrick Byrne, president of Overstock.com, said the Salt Lake City-based online discounter is doing some very heavy lifting with a major investment in new computer systems.

"They almost failed last Christmas. We just couldn't keep up," he said, noting that the project involves equipment upgrades, enlarging bandwidth and swapping out home-grown software for more robust commercial products.

EBags CEO Jon Nordmark said his site is putting its entire catalog online for the first time this year and will again offer customers free second-day air-shipping upgrades.

"The time frames tightened up a lot last year. People have higher expectations of sites to get things there at the last minute," Nordmark said. *Reuters*

Embrace excellence, get back on track

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Franco G. del Rosario

THIS year's 3rd MAP International CEO Conference is on Nov. 11 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

The theme is "Survive and Excel in Turbulent Times." We will focus this year on strategies and opportunities; particularly what leaders and managers can do and must do to ensure survival and sustainability in the immediate and distant future.

In one day, the MAP brings together renowned business leaders and speakers to bring about a balance of business practices and perspectives—local, regional and global—into the comprehensive agenda for change.

Embracing excellence

One of the speakers is Dr. Frank Ashby.

His most recent book is on building and sustaining high-performance organizations, "Embracing Excellence—Become An Employer Of Choice To Attract And Keep The Best Talent."

Dr. Ashby has vast experience gained from the training and coaching programs he has conducted at 800 of the Fortune 1000, and in 77 countries throughout the world.

He was formerly VP, instruction & chief learning officer of Dale Carnegie & Associates Inc., the world's largest leadership training organization.

Good to great

This is indeed a great read in conjunction with Jim Collins book, "Good To Great."

The first part of Collins' book is "Disciplined People"; of which there are four key considerations. The single most important consideration is "getting the right people on the bus." Bus is a metaphor used in the book for companies.

Collins starts with getting the right people since it takes right people to "get wrong people off the bus"; which is actually the second key consideration. Wrong people will not get other wrong people off the bus since they relate to other wrong people. They are their own kind.

The third key consideration of Collins is "make sure right people are in their right seats in the bus." The point Collins makes is that the single most difficult task of a firm is finding right people.

Hence, once you have the right person, the last thing you would want to do is to get him off the bus because he happens to be sitting in the wrong seat.

Collins' "Good to Great" is a great segue to Dr. Ashby's "Embracing Excellence" which discusses, among others, tips on retaining the right people.

Lessons learned

This is why the book of Dr. Frank Ashby is most helpful to firms in their efforts to attract right people and once they are on board, on keeping them.

According to Dr. Ashby, among those that attract right people are generally high performance organizations with six basic attributes: (1) they have a missionary zeal; you see enthusiasm everywhere, (2) they have a sense of pride, sincerity and cooperation, (3) there is an emphasis on creativity, (4) there is a focus on building role models, (5) there is an attitude of constructive discontent, and (6) they have a habit of celebrating success—an appreciation for accomplishments.

Dr. Ashby explains why right people on their own get off what they believe are wrong buses for them. The nine biggest issues right people have with their bosses are:

(1) inequitable compensation,
(2) leading by fear,
(3) no clear career path,
(4) mediocre performance is tolerated (so why bother to do superior work?),
(5) unfulfilled promises,
(6) putting personal interests of a leader above everything,
(7) being treated as second class citizens,
(8) failure to reward superior work and
(9) feeling unappreciated.

Dr. Ashby points to surveys which signify that recognition for a job well done is the single biggest motivator for employee performance.

Back on track

Attendees to this year's MAP CEO Conference will be among the first to hear Dr. Ashby shortly before the launch of his next book this fall, "Back On Track."

In a recent survey of nearly 13,000 American workers at all job levels in most major industries in the US, the consulting firm Watson Wyatt found that only 39 percent of employees trust senior leaders at American companies.

The issues of "trust" encompasses all members of the work force, regardless of race, color, or creed. It would be to our advantage to hear first-hand the various thought parameters of this very important aspect of our own organizations and human capital.

Ilene Gochman Ph.D., Watson Wyatt's national practice leader for organization measurement and author of the survey explains, "Employee trust levels and corporate performance are closely linked. In fact, our survey found that the rate of three-year total returns to shareholders is almost three times higher at companies with high trust levels than at companies with low trust levels."

Dr. Ashby shows that the historically low levels of organizational trust in American business today is a top-down problem—one created and nurtured by senior management. He also shows that the reason for the problem is because of two business trends.

The first trend is the changes in the way business executives have come to define success since the economic boom of the 1980s. The second trend is the changes to the rules of engagement within the senior ranks of corporate America.

The problem is some executives take liberties in twisting the definitions of right and wrong—ethical and unethical—when their personal agenda competes with making money for the company. Unfortunately, this highlighted the sad agenda of personal fame, fortune and glory.

This is in fact the opposite of two unique characteristics of a level five leader (highest in the leadership hierarchy), which are: personal humility and building generationally.

Finally, Dr. Ashby explains that the reasons many of the organizational fixes fail to generate truly lasting change is because the treatments were applied to the wrong group of people and that is at too low a level in the organization.

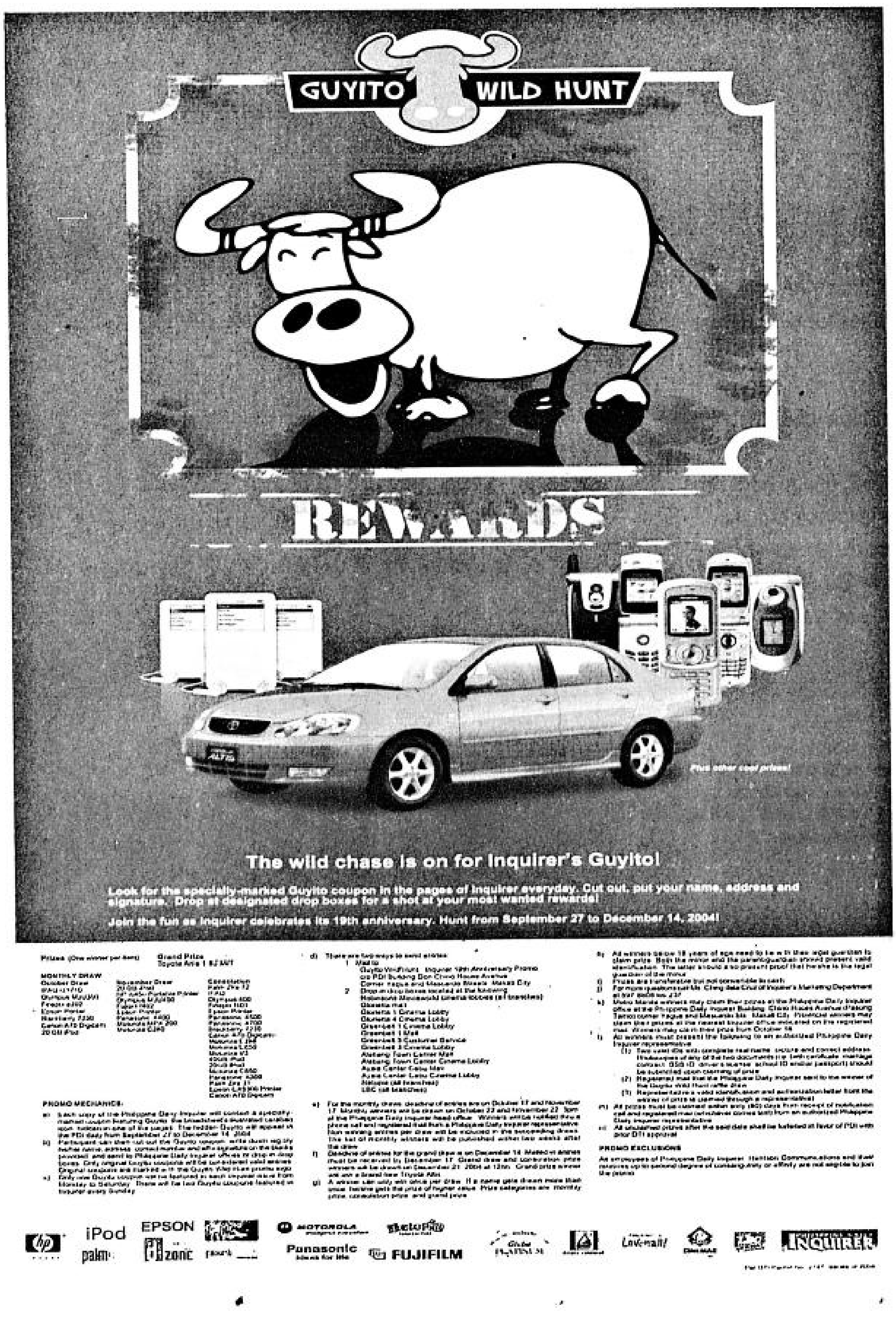
Sequel

"Back On Track" reveals the secrets of organizations that have successfully identified and rid themselves of unethical managers (what Jim Collins calls wrong people) and management practices.

Filipinos will be interested to know from Dr. Ashby "techniques" on how these firms transformed their troubled cultures into environments that bubble over with excitement.

In addition, these companies are alive with a genuine optimism, and are characterized by relationships grounded on shared visions, creativity, respect and mutual trust.

(The author is chair of the MAP CEO Conference Committee and managing consultant and CEO of Six Sigma Consulting. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)



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Management skills…

From page B1

you will most certainly have unlimited potential to earn money. How much money you earn depends on the time and effort you put into your enterprise. Successful entrepreneurs have earned their wealth and prestige through hard work and by having the right product for the right market at the right time.

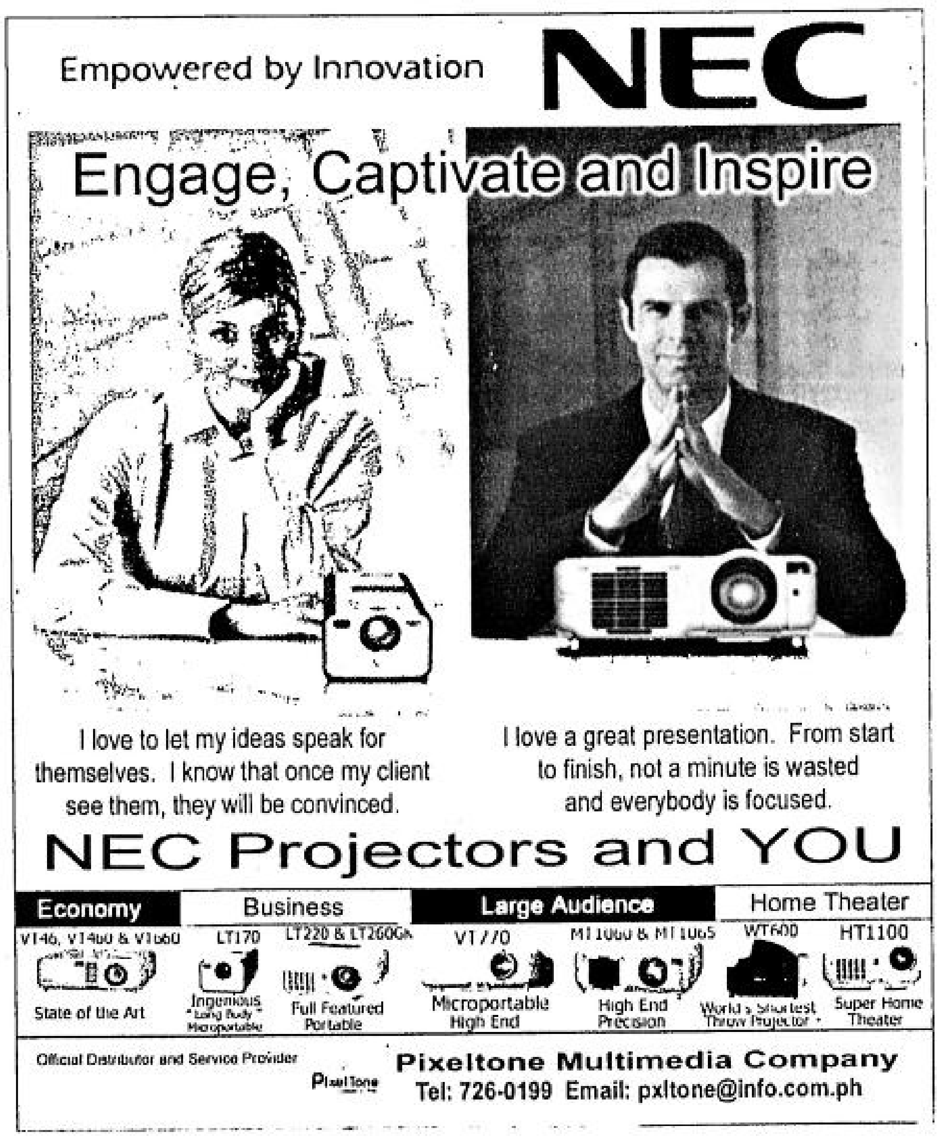
Be your own boss. As sole proprietor of your business, you make the decisions for your enterprise and take full responsibility for them. The quality of these decisions will translate into either gain or loss for your business. Being your own boss means you are in control of your future. You have a better grasp of what you want to be.

Tap your creativity. A business usually starts out as an idea. You will have the opportunity to harness this creativity and turn your idea into products and processes.

Overcome challenges and feel fulfilled. Starting a business is by itself an accomplishment. Running a business tests an entrepreneur's capability in securing and managing resources. How well a business turns out depends on the owner's ability to face challenges and overcome them.

Risks of entrepreneurship

Risk of failure
Unpredictable business conditions
Long hours of work
Unwanted or unexpected responsibilities



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Luxury serviced residences: Profitable hospitality niché

FOLLOWING the success of Oakwood Premier Ayala Center in the Philippines as a new and profitable niche in the hospitality industry, more Oakwood Premiere luxury serviced residences will rise in major Asian cities in the next three years.

Established in 1998, Oakwood Premier Ayala Center made a strong impact on business travelers in the Asian market as one of the first serviced residence properties to also have five-star appointments and hotel services. Previous to this, serviced apartments were usually considered as budget accommodations. Upgrading them with luxurious furnishings and first-class services appealed strongly to executives on business, a highly-coveted segment in the travel industry, according to Robert Philips, director of sales and marketing of Oakwood Asia Pacific.

Four more Oakwood Premieres in Asia will be completed by 2007, he notes. These will be located in Bangkok, Thailand; Bangalore, India; Jakarta, Indonesia; and Tokyo, Japan. Aside from Manila's 306 suites, a recently built property in Seoul currently offers 270 luxury residences. The new establishments will put 730 more Oakwood Premier units onstream in Asia.

Manila was among the early pioneers in the top-end serviced residences market when Ayala Land Inc. along with Rodamco Asia put up the 306 Oakwood Premier Ayala Center. Conferred a Kalakbay Award from the Department of Tourism in 2003, it has consistently been among the best performing properties in the Makati financial district and has been breaking its own occupancy records.

Philips observes that the acceptance of luxury serviced residences was prompted by a reduction of permanent expatriates in Asia by many multinational companies following the economic crisis of the late 90s. Rather than expatriate executives and their families, these companies chose to send consultants abroad on short-term assignments ranging from one to six months.

Because of their unique situation, these travelers felt confined in a hotel room, but did not find it feasible to move into a house or apartment since these are usually let out on a yearly basis. Luxury serviced residences which afforded them the comforts of home and benefits of a hotel filled their special needs. At Oakwood Premier Ayala Center, they also enjoyed the convenience of renting for as long as they wanted—from one night up to one year.

Philips observes: "The productivity of business travelers is of utmost importance... Companies want them settled and productive as soon as possible after arrival."

The luxury residences with a work and seating area as well as multiple phone lines and broadband internet connection allow them to work in their suites and to hold small meetings there. Should they be traveling with their families, they have the option to choose from among a range of units—from studios all the way up to three-bedroom suites—one that will suit their needs. Comments Al Legaspi, resident manager of Oakwood Premier Ayala Center, the luxury residences afford them luxury as well as great value.

Business travelers in Manila also have the bonus of making use of Oakwood Premier Ayala Center's 21 fully furnished serviced offices, ranging from 11 to 51 sq.m. The units are available for lease on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis. An executive needs merely to set up his laptop in these well-appointed units with multiple phone lines and internet access so he can begin working.

More Oakwood Premieres will be built in other Asian locales in the coming years, says Philips.

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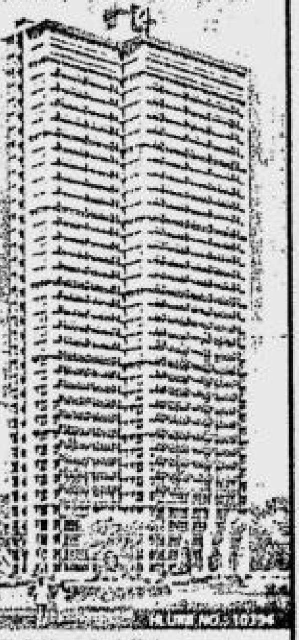

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* Patients who underwent EARLY PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT in a clinical study reported improvement with their appearance at 5 years, as well as decrease in hair loss and an increase in the amount of hair. (Eur J Dermatol 2002;12:38-49)

1. Libecco JF, Berg Feld WF Expert Opin Pharmacother 2004; 5 (4):933-940

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US court: Opinion of counsel will not protect tax evaders

By Raul J. Palabrica

TAX lawyers in the country are reputed to be experts in finding loopholes in our tax laws that big businessmen can take advantage of to reduce their financial obligations to the government.

In defense of their profession, tax lawyers argue that tax avoidance is legal, while tax evasion is illegal. They claim it is not their fault that they are able to discover the gray areas in the tax laws that enable their clients to avoid or minimize their tax obligations.

It is common practice for big taxpayers who find possible areas for tax avoidance to get written opinions from their tax lawyers or accountants confirming or validating their understanding of tax provisions that are susceptible to different interpretations.

Of course, the interpretation that works to the advantage of the taxpayer gets a favorable response. Using the opinion of counsel as legal basis, the taxpayer then proceeds to compute and pay the taxes he thinks he owes the government.

If the Bureau of Internal Revenue later declares the taxes paid to be incorrect and orders the payment of additional taxes, plus interest, penalties and surcharges, the taxpayer can cite "reliance on the opinion of counsel" as justification to ask for the withdrawal of the additional chargers.

Liberal treatment

Following the jurisprudence in the United States from which our tax laws have been derived, that excuse is usually allowed by our revenue officials, including the tax courts.

The liberal treatment is premised on the principle that a taxpayer should not be penalized for following the advice of his lawyer in the interpretation of our tax laws. Neither should the lawyer be taken to task for giving the wrong advice because he is presumed have acted in good faith when he rendered his opinion.

Considering that the interest is usually 20 percent per annum and the penalties and surcharges are not less than 25 percent of the unpaid taxes, the successful invocation of the "good faith" defense can translate to substantial savings for the taxpayer.

It's a win-win situation for the taxpayer: if the validity of his tax avoidance is upheld, he reduces his tax liabilities; if the tax reduction is declared inappropriate and his "good faith" plea is accepted, he is no worse situation than before.

He will be paying the same amount of taxes he should have paid in the first place. However, between the time he initially pays his taxes until he pays the balance of his liabilities, he can use the money for other purposes. It's like using other people's money without having to pay interest.

Transactions

The extent to which an opinion of counsel can be used as a shield by a taxpayer for protection from tax evasion charges has been redefined in a recent decision of a US district court.

The case involves Long Term Capital Management, an investment company with a capitalization of $6 billion, which engaged, among other businesses, in the sale and purchase of long-term leases and commercial papers of profitable companies.

In 1997, Long Term entered into a series of transactions that netted it tremendous profits. To avoid paying $40 million in taxes for those deals, it claimed tax deductions worth $106 million.

After declaring the transactions a sham, the US Internal Revenue Service disallowed the deductions and ordered Long Term to pay some $56 million in unpaid taxes, penalties and surcharges. Long Term defended the validity of the financial arrangements in question and invoked as part of its defense the opinions rendered by two law offices in relation to them.

The opinions of counsel stated that the transactions were above board and entitled to the tax deductions being claimed by Long Term.

In its 196-page decision, the court analyzed every step of the transactions to determine their eligibility for the deductions and the validity of the $56 million additional assessment.

Legal opinion

The court upheld the action of the IRS. On the question of whether Long Term can invoke the defense that it acted with "reasonable cause and good faith" in following its lawyers' advice on the transactions and deductions, the court ruled that:

"Before a taxpayer may be considered to have reasonably relied in good faith on advice, two threshold requirements must be satisfied:

"(1) the advice must be based upon all pertinent facts and circumstances and the law as it relates to those facts and circumstances, including taking into account the taxpayer's purpose for entering into a transaction and for structuring a transaction in a particular manner, and it is not adequate if the taxpayer fails to disclose a fact that it knows, or should know, to be relevant to the proper tax treatment of an item;

"(2) the advice must not be based on unreasonable factual and legal assumptions (including assumptions as to future events) and must not unreasonably rely on the representations, findings or agreements of the taxpayer or any other person, including a representation or assumption that the taxpayer knows, or has reason to know, is unlikely to be true."

Obligations

In other words, to enable the taxpayer to claim the benefits of the defense of "reliance in good faith on the advice of counsel," it must be shown that before the lawyer rendered his opinion he thoroughly examined the details of the transaction and did not merely rely on the statements or representations made by his client.

The lawyer is obliged to take a proactive, not a passive or listening post, stance in determining whether the tax arrangement submitted to him for advice meets the requirements of applicable laws and is not aimed at evading compliance with tax responsibilities.

In the instant case, the court was not convinced the opinions rendered by Long Term's lawyers met that criterion.

The law firms' plea—"trust us, we looked into all pertinent facts, we were involved, we researched all applicable authorities, we made no unreasonable assumptions, Long Term gave us all information"—was curtly rejected by the court.

US COURT/ B2-7

MOVEMENTS

New Blue Cross CEO

CASEY

THE BLUE Cross Group of Companies proudly announces the appointment of their new chief executive officer, John Casey.

An expert in the management of financial services businesses, Casey has contributed immensely to the growth of various non-life and healthcare companies in the Philippines, across Asia and Australia. Prior to joining Blue Cross, he was President and CEO of the John Hancock Life Insurance Corp. in the Philippines. With an extensive experience across Asian markets, Casey is also well versed in the areas of strategic and operational planning and financial management.

"We are confident that Mr. Casey is highly qualified to lead and manage Blue Cross into becoming the leading provider in of medical, travel and healthcare services in the Philippines. We trust that he brings with him a wealth of expertise and experience that will propel the company to bigger and greater heights," stated Stuart McCarthy, chair of the Board.

"I am delighted to be here," says Casey of his recent appointment. The product lines that Blue Cross offer provide solutions of families in the Philippines. I would like to maximize this opportunity to make these excellent products and services available to more Filipinos."

Blue Cross Insurance Inc. and Blue Cross Health Care are one of the leading providers of medial insurance, travel insurance and total healthcare management in the Philippines. Their head office is located at Blue Cross Center, 8000 Makati Avenue, Makati City. For more information, please call 899-8001 or visit www.bluecross.com.ph.

New execs at JR Powers

CLEMENTE

JOHN Robert Powers International recently appointed new directors for the school. Heading the list is Lorna Cabañero Clemente as franchise director in charge of all the concerns and interests of the 12 franchises of JRP in the Asia Pacific region.

Second is Susan Dimayuga Javier as marketing and sales director for JRP-Manila. Third is Teresa Carlos Aviñante as curriculum director.

Clemente, a CPA, has three degrees such as Bachelor of Interior Design from the University of the Philippines; Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Far Eastern University and Lia Com. from Assumption College.

JAVIER

Ms Javier was former senior sales consultant of JRP before her new appointment.

Aviñante was former assistant professor in Assumption College handling communication, advertising, and public relations. She was former curriculum and teaching manager of JRP-Manila before her new appointment and is a candidate for Ph.D. in human resource management.

The executive director of JRP-International is Marlvic Padilla-Catala.

Excellence awards for men launched

A GREAT great man excels in his field because he is passionate about his work. He is confident of who he is and what he has accomplished. Most of all he knows what he wants and how to get it. He is in constant pursuit of excellence in his personal and professional life. These are the true measures of a man - characteristics that Fundador Gold Reserve advocates.

In choosing the finer things in life, a great man opts for those with substance. The Fundador man is not flashy but unpretentious, not pompous but respectably reserved.

Fundador Gold Reserve believes it is time men who represent the brandy's ideals of excellence be recognized and commended. As such, it recently launched its first-ever Fundador Golden Excellence Awards.

The search is open to men who are active members of key organizations in the country—professional, academic, socio-civic and other affiliations. Fundador Gold Reserve will work closely with these organizations in picking out awardees who are good role models among their peers and in society.

Fundador Gold Reserve recently handed out its first set of Golden Excellence Awards to outstanding members of the Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers (PSME). The ceremony will be held during the PSME's 52nd Convention at the World Trade Center in Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

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- The Making of a TV Commercial Project
- Breakthrough in Commercial Photography Project
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- Below the Line Advertising: Challenges and Corporate Strategies

OCTOBER 20, 2004 (DAY 2)
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THREE years after Manila-based Chikka.com launched its mobile instant messenger, Chikka is one of the most viewed and used electronic properties by Filipinos in the Philippines and all over the world, according to the company's chief operating officer at the celebration of 10 Years of the Internet in the Philippines (One Internet Day) held recently at the SM Cyberzone in Mandaluyong City.

"At any given time, over one million PC and unified (PC and mobile) users are online chatting via our Chikka Txt Messenger," said COO Chito Bustamante.

"And so more than any other Internet-based service today, excepting email, Chikka is the one thing that is bringing Filipinos together as an online community," Bustamante said.

Chikka is downloadable instant messaging software that lets PC users send free text messages to any mobile phone in the Philippines. Mobile users simply "text back" as they would to an ordinary text message, except this one zips through the Internet to his phone.

Launched in 2001, the unique application successfully married SMS and instant messaging (IM) technology. Eleven million subscribers make up the entire network at present, going online whenever prompted by PC buddies who see them on their screens.

Smart and Globe mobile phone users also have the advantage of "unifying" their PC and mobile accounts by simply using their GSM numbers as their Chikka log-on IDs.

When away from their computer, their instant messaging session is uninterrupted as they still get messages via SMS.

Finally, the traditional IM feature of buddy presence detection is supported on mobile. Thus, it is now possible to check via SMS who are online on their PCs.

"We get tens of thousands of registrations daily, many by overseas Filipinos who depend on Chikka's two-way PC to mobile messaging to keep in touch with friends and family," said Bustamante.

"We see ourselves now as promoting both 'cultures,' instant messaging and text messaging. The next step is to bring our community to more mobile operators around the world. This has begun for select Asian countries as well as in the US where mobile users in select areas are now also enjoying the benefits of unifying their PC and cell phone IDs."

Chikka Asia Inc. is a pioneer in wireless applications services development, having created the world's first mobile IM and proceeding to launch it in the coveted "SMS Capital."

The company has since developed other integrated applications including mobile-interactive TV, SMS-enabled auction sites, mobile matchmaking, and mobile versions of Internet Relay Chat.

It has fully exploited proprietary "suffixing" technology to bring successful Internet models to the mobile world.

It licenses the same patented methods to affiliates and partners who have employed them for various mobile solutions, in turn launched by international carriers.

In 2002, Chikka Asia Inc., the company's regional operating entity based in Manila became one of the first mobile data enablers in the world to be ISO-certified under the 9001:2000 series.

By aligning its management and software development processes with international standards, Chikka has helped establish the region as a global hub for excellent wireless applications testing and development.

Birthday greetings for
Francisco Guy

Dear Papa:

We miss you very much, and we want to greet you a HAPPY 79th BIRTHDAY!

Everyday, we pray that we will soon be reunited. Don't lose hope, have faith in God and prayer.

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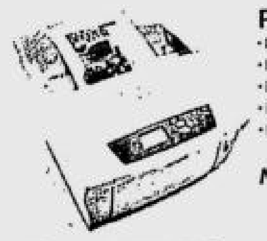

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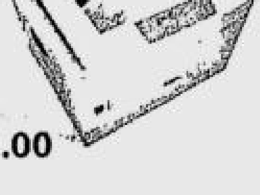

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Aussie filmfest at The Podium

AT THE opening of the 2 Australian Film Festival at The Podium were Australian Ambassador Ruth Pearce (2nd from left) and (from left) Chris Hoban, Keppel Property Philippines country manager Sin Wai Meng, and Randy Urlanda.

THE SECOND Australian Film Festival recently unreeled at The Podium, bringing together members of the diplomatic corps, film industry, corporate executives, the members of the Australian community in Manila.

Australian Ambassador Ruth Pearce graced the occasion, as did the Australian Embassy's Deputy Head of Mission Ermitag, AUSAid counselor Angus MacDonald, AUSTrade senior trade commissioner Alan Morrel, Anza's Megan Douglas, and the Australian Embassy's Public Affairs Manager Karen Tagle.

Also seen enjoying the critically acclaimed films were US Embassy's Daniel Ricci, as well as corporate executives such as ADB's Madeleine Varkay, Michicko Suga, Steve Sedgewick, Trevor Smith, HSBC's Martin Cook and Jennifer Crawford. They were welcomed by Keppel Properties Philippines country head Sin Wai Meng.

The festival unreeled at The Podium's luxe Cinema 2 with the award-winning film "Walking on Water". Other critically acclaimed films included in the subsequent 10-day run at the SM Megamall Cinema included "Australian Rules", "The Tracker", "The Hard Word", "Hildegarde", "Garage Days", "Better Than Sex", "Doing Time for Patsy Cline", and "Black and White". Eric Bana's debut film "Chopper", which featured him in a solo role, was also screened.

The Second Australian Film Festival was spearheaded by the Australian Embassy in cooperation with The Podium, SM Cinema, and Smart Communications.

ABC PRESIDENT GAWAD CCP AWARDEE

Antonio O. Cojuangco, president and CEO of the Associated Broadcasting Company (ABC) was awarded the Gawad CCP Tanging Parangal by the Cultural Center of the Philippines at the 2004 Gawad Para sa Sining awards ceremonies held recently at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo, which highlighted CCP's 35th anniversary celebration. The award is given to organizations or individuals who have made significant contributions in support of the arts and cultural advancement. Outside of his business enterprises, Cojuangco is actively involved in cultural institutions as chair of the National Museum, Tanghalang Pilipino, Ballet Philippines and Radio Veritas. He continues to promote Philippine arts and culture through film and the broadcast media. Cojuangco is shown (left) receiving his award from Lorna Kapunan, member, CCP board of trustees and Nestor O. Jardin, CCP president. Gawad Para sa Sining awards were also given to 11 other exemplary individuals who have excelled in their respective art forms.

Optimum formula vs HPN: Affordable 2-in-1 drug with lifestyle change

HEALTH experts emphasize that lifestyle changes remain a cornerstone in the treatment of hypertension; and sustained intake of an effective medication is equally important to prevent life-threatening complications.

Lifestyle changes, although initially recommended, would not suffice once hypertension becomes advanced. Many cases require the more aggressive therapy afforded by medication like ace inhibitors, diuretics, and angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), and beta blockers.

While monotherapy, or one-drug therapy, is considered adequate for the initial treatment of hypertensive patients, the seventh report of the Joint National Committee (JNC VII) on high blood pressure treatment recognizes that a combination therapy such as ARBs and diuretics is most effective in lowering the blood pressure of the large proportion of patients.

According to the JNC VII, ARBs plus diuretics is an optimal combination as the mechanisms of the two agents are different and complementary. The combination works by blocking the action of certain chemicals that tighten the blood vessels so blood flows more freely.

However, clinical data has proven that combining ARBs and diuretics in single high doses poses serious side effects to many patients. This explains the significant need for a fixed-dose combination drug-with the two compounds in safer doses-to reduce adverse effects while effectively lowering blood pressure.

Besides tolerability, however, another important concern is the price of such drugs. Doctors are sometimes hesitant to prescribe the more aggressive combination therapy because the majority of patients will not be able to afford them. Due to economic considerations, most Filipinos do not regard medicines as a priority nor acknowledge the value of healthcare.

As a consequence, their health condition deteriorates not because of the lack of good medicines but their cost, especially for lifelong diseases like hypertension. For the average wage earner, expensive antihypertensive drugs can ironically trigger high blood pressure and, in effect, defeat the purpose.

High medicine cost presents the biggest barrier to many drugs as far as patient compliance is concerned. For this reason, the call for an affordable combination therapy drug, one that does not sacrifice efficacy, has never been more relevant.

The issue prompted many concerned people to call on pharmaceutical companies to develop and market drugs that are easy on the pocket. The various divisions of United Laboratories have reaffirmed their commitment towards this end.

MFI, SAUDI GROUP ACCORD

The O&M division of the Saudi Binladin Group (SBG) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Meralco Foundation Inc (MFI) signed a memorandum of understanding whereby MFI will provide SBG with expertise in developing curriculum and technical assistance, which include actual training in establishing the Binladin Training Institute for vocational training in Jeddah-Saudi Arabia. Shown are SBG human resource consultant engineer Amin Hammoud (left) and MFI president Col. Alex T. Escaño (right) during the signing of the contract. Rush Sulnan (center), SBG executive manager, witnesses the occasion.

MSD voluntarily withdraws Vioxx worldwide

WHITEHOUSE STATION, N.J-Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) recently announced a voluntary worldwide withdrawal of Vioxx (rofecoxib), its arthritis and acute pain medication. The company's decision, which is effective immediately, is based on new, three-year data from a prospective, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trial, the Approve (Adenomatous Polyp Prevention on Vioxx) trial.

The trial, which is being stopped, was designed to evaluate the efficacy of Vioxx 25 mg in preventing recurrence of colorectal polyps in patients with a history of colorectal adenomas. In this study, there was an increased relative risk for confirmed cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke, beginning after 18 months of treatment in the patients taking Vioxx compared to those taking placebo. The results for the first 18 months of the Approve study did not show any increased risk of confirmed cardiovascular events on Vioxx, and in this respect, are similar to the results of two placebo-controlled studies described in the current US labeling for Vioxx.

"We are taking this action because we believe it best serves the interests of patients," said Raymond V. Gilmartin, chair, president and chief executive officer of Merck. "Although we believe it would have been possible to continue to market Vioxx with labeling that would incorporate these new data, given the availability of alternative therapies, and the questions raised by the data, we concluded that a voluntary withdrawal is the responsible course to take."

Approve was a multi-center, randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind study to determine the effect of 156 weeks (three years) of treatment with Vioxx on the recurrence of neoplastic polyps of the large bowel in patients with a history of colorectal adenoma. The trial enrolled 2,600 patients and compared Vioxx 25 mg to placebo. The trial began enrollment in 2000.

Vioxx was launched in the United States in 1999 and has been marketed in over 80 countries. In some countries, the product is marketed under the trademark Ceoxx. Worldwide sales of Vioxx in 2003 were $2.5 billion.

Results of the Vigor (Vioxx Gastrointestinal Outcomes Research) study, released in March 2000, demonstrated that the risk of gastrointestinal toxicity with Vioxx was less than with naproxen, but indicated an increased risk of cardiovascular events versus naproxen. However, in other studies including MSD's Phase III studies that were the basis of regulatory approval of the product, there was not an increased risk of cardiovascular events on Vioxx compared with placebo or Vioxx compared with other non-naproxen non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAids). MSD began long-term randomized clinical trials to provide an even more comprehensive picture of the cardiovascular safety profile of Vioxx.

"Merck has always believed that prospective, randomized, controlled clinical trials are the best way to evaluate the safety of medicines. Approve is precisely this type of study-and it has provided us with new data on the cardiovascular profile of Vioxx," said Peter S. Kim Ph.D, president of Merck Research Laboratories. "While the cause of these results is uncertain at this time, they suggest an increased risk of confirmed cardiovascular events beginning after 18 months of continuous therapy. While we recognize that Vioxx benefited many patients, we believe this action is appropriate." MSD has informed the Food and Drug Administration and regulatory authorities in other countries of its decision. The company also is in the process of notifying health care practitioners in the United States and other countries where Vioxx is marketed.

Patients who are currently taking Vioxx should contact their health care providers to discuss discontinuing use of Vioxx and possible alternative treatments. In addition, patients and health care professionals may obtain information from www.merck.com, www.vioxx.com and www.msd.com.ph, or they may call hotline number 878-6338 and 1-800-1-888-6737 (toll-free), or email their inquiries through medicalsecretary@merck.com.

The results of clinical studies with one molecule in a given class are not necessarily applicable to others in the class. Therefore, the clinical significance of the Approve trial, if any, for the long-term use of other drugs in this class, consisting of COX-2 specific inhibitors and NSAids, is unknown. The company will work with regulatory authorities in the 47 countries where Arcoxia is approved to assess whether changes to the prescribing information for this class of drugs, including Arcoxia, are warranted. MSD is continuing to seek approval for Arcoxia in other countries, including the United States.

MSD will continue its extensive clinical program to collect additional longer-term data for Arcoxia, its medication for arthritis and acute pain.

AYSC 1ST BADMINTON TOURNEY

The Atin Yan Sports Club of BBHP Pandacan, in cooperation with the Barangay Council and Chair Norby Evangelio recently concluded its 1st badminton tournament held at the AYSC Badminton Court. Shown are officers of AYSC, standing, from left, Arnel Comia (VP-internal), Bibot Holgado (vice chair), Marlon Olan (chair), Roger Sy (marshall), Michi Regalado (sports coordinator), Bong Arboleda (marshall), Pia Marasigan (secretary), Ryan Tiamzon (athletic moderator), Ying Bautista (PRO), Mirlo Olan (president), Ronald Pilapil (auditor), Jun AngCo (VP-external) and Arnie Antonio (treasurer). Not shown is business manager Raffy Andrada.

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PSID DRAWS SUPPORT FROM REAL ESTATE COMPANY

The Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID), the country's only school dedicated to the study of design, has chosen the Paseo Center as the venue for its much-awaited annual exhibit of the Advance Class 2004 dubbed 'Popcorn' ongoing until Oct. 31. The exhibit showcases the designs of PSID's 2004 graduating class inspired by movie themes: from musicals to kidstuff, science fiction to box office blockbusters and award-winning masterpieces. Rooms are themed ala 'Moulin Rouge', '101 Dalmatians', 'Matrix', 'Interview with the Vampire', 'Austin Powers', 'Cleopatra' and 'Frida'. ERA is the first international real estate franchise in the Philippines, and is at the helm of the Eastwood City commercial complex in Quezon City and the Paseo Center (formerly the IBM Building in Makati). Shown during the recent contract signing are (from left) Emil M. Garcia, group head, ERA technical advisory group, Kevin Tan, director of commercial operations for ERA commercial services group, Jie Pambid, dean of students at PSID, and Joby Belmonte, president of the Advance Class 2004 of PSID. At the back are (from left) Drew Gallano, Lea Lee, Jen Sy, and Chico Cristobal, co-chair of the construction committee, auditor, PRO and external vice president of the PSID Advance Class 2004.

Soprano's farewell concert in Magallanes Village

INTERNATIONALLY renowned soprano Camille Lopez Molina, together with tenor Pablo Molina and soprano Teene Chan, will be the featured artists at a concert to be held on Oct. 6, Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Asia Pacific Auditorium in Magallanes Village, Makati. The evening's program includes opera arias, familiar broadway tunes and Filipino classics. It serves as the farewell performance of Lopez-Molina before she leaves for Vienna where she is based. Recently, she was the soloist for the opening concert of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The concert is first in a series of musical events organized by the Music Ministry of St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori parish in Magallanes headed by Maribel Cantada and Anne B. Borgaily. For inquiries, call 851-4632 (Maribel) or 852-5335 (Anne) during office hours

SERVICES SECTOR

Europe presents opportunities for RP companies

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WHEN it comes to looking for investments and market opportunities, the Philippines usually turns to the United States for help.

But there is always Europe. And the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines wants to remind the country's small and medium enterprises that the continent, with its single economy, is an expanding market that offers equally promising profit prospects.

Henry J. Schumacher, ECCP executive vice president, tells the INQUIRER that the ECCP is helping organize a trade mission to Europe to promote the country's prospects in the IT-enabled services sector.

This includes call center operations, business process outsourcing and legal transcription services, which have absorbed thousands of Filipino graduates over the past four years.

"The idea is to get the message across that the Philippines is a quality source of IT-enabled services. We could start with call centers. That is the first step, then we could move on to the BPO," Schumacher says.

He says there are also opportunities in the animation sector and in the provision of engineering services to firms in Europe.

The first stop of the trade mission, which would kick off on Nov. 8, will bring 10 local IT firms to Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

It will then move on to the Germany, Sweden and Norway the following week where business-matching opportunities would be explored.

Schumacher adds that there are also business opportunities in the wellness, health and medical services sectors.

"We are currently segmenting the market and we see possibilities in promoting areas such as simple wellness industries like spas, to the vanity services and to dental services and eye clinics. There are also possibilities in the assisted living services and retirement homes," he says.

Schumacher says there is indeed business to be made in Europe, if only local firms would be aggressive enough in making it in that part of the world.

He says embassies of European countries were likewise active in getting foreign companies to forge joint ventures with their local counterparts.

The embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, is inaugurating the German Development Center next week.

This is one of the activities to celebrate the German month, which strives to bring Germany closer to the heart and mind of the Philippines.

Schumacher says local firms have not usually included Europe in their potential areas for expansion because it is not as familiar to the Filipinos as the United States. This despite having been under European rule for centuries.

"There is the lack of familiarity with the language and the culture. We want to help change that," he says.

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(FROM left): Henry Schumacher, ECCP executive vice president; Dr. Axel Weishaput, German Ambassador to the Philippines; and Oscar Lopez, co-chair of the Philippine-German Economic Council invite RP firms to consider opportunities in Europe PHOTO BY BETOY JOHNSON

Develop a succession . . .

From page B2-8

to "provide outstanding customer service." Nordstrom has institutionalized its brand charter by recognizing and rewarding Nordies who have rendered heroic customer service. Among the stories include a Nordie who ironed a newly bought shirt for a customer who needed it the same afternoon, a Nordie who made a last minute delivery of party wear to a frantic hostess, etc.

Build the mechanism for great mentors. Companies that develop a succession line of brand champions have present leaders who respect and recognize talent and expertise encourage employees' creativity and learning. These leaders are confident about their skills and expertise while acknowledging their weaknesses yet they are not afraid to surround themselves with people who have the strength they do not have. They are not autocratic, but are servant leaders, selfless in sharing their knowledge, are team players and real-life role models who encourage and inspire down-line success. Bruce, Jim and John Nordstrom, encourage their employees to do whatever it takes to fulfill their brand charter to make a customer happy. There is only one Nordstrom rule: provide outstanding customer service. Each Nordie enjoys operational freedom to make a customer happy within the Nordstrom yet without the impractical, insensible restrictions that deter the brand mission.

Build a culture of creativity. A company that aims to develop a succession line of brand champions has a succession mechanism that encourages a healthy discussion and dynamic interaction of where to take the brand. Along with this is the speedy support of great ideas regardless of the source. This means, that no one person railroads the discussion. A lot and more of the whys are raised rather than what and how. Deep, critical, experimental and creative thinking is encouraged. Great ideas are acknowledged and rewarded. 3M's culture of creativity and innovativeness is grounded by two of its many mechanisms that reflect the brand charter. These two mechanisms are the 15 per cent rule where employees can spend as much as 15 percent of their time on personal projects. This encourages experimentation and unexpected innovation. The other is the Genesis grant that allocates $50,000 for an employee to develop prototypes and do market tests.

Sustain a culture of learning. Companies with a succession of brand champions encourage continuous learning. People are not viewed as machines nor an expense but great assets and resources that must be continuously nurtured. Organizations with a culture of learning prioritize their employees learning and allocate substantial man-hours to further their employees' prowess. Their OD experts understand that continuous learning is key to leveraging their people and consequently, differentiating the company's brand.

Today, in this knowledge economy, the learned companies realize that key to protecting the equity of their brand and guaranteeing further streams of profit is to have a roster and long line of brand champions that are nurturing caretakers. Competitors can copy products, match prices, raise their share of media spending, etc. but it takes a longer time to build a succession of brand champions. One must begin with a visionary leadership and a culture that believes that people can make, build, grow and role model brands.

The author is chief Learning Officer of Marketing Knowledge Series Training and Consultancy. Feedback at kdeasis@skyinet.net.

US court . . .

From page B4

In the wake of the costly court ruling, the two law offices face the prospect of being sued for damages by their client. Malpractice suits in the United States against incompetent lawyers have become a multi-million business for the legal profession in that country.

Effect

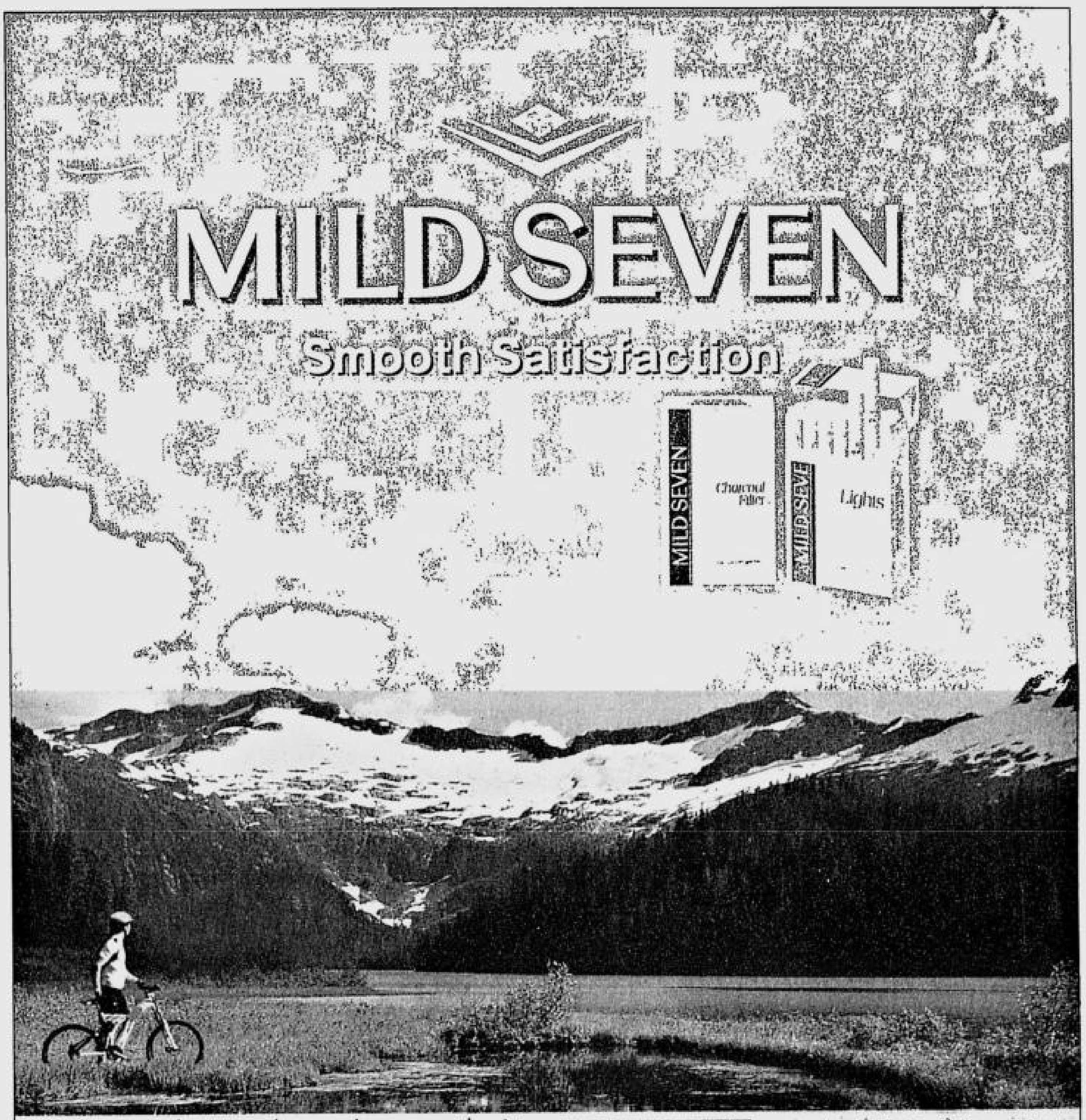
Unless reversed by a higher court (which is unlikely considering its intrinsic merit), the ruling is expected to have a strong persuasive effect on our BIR and tax courts.

If the criteria laid down in the Long Term case is followed here, our tax lawyers have to be more careful in their examination of the facts and circumstances of tax issues that may, upon their advice, result in the reduction or nonpayment of taxes by their clients.

It is not enough for the lawyer to say that he prepared the opinion based on the statements and representations of his client; he has to undertake a "due diligence" of sorts to make sure all possible contentious points in the transaction are addressed.

In case he falls short of this requirement, the opinion on which his client relied on to justify the reduction of his tax obligations will be reduced to a mere scrap of paper. The error may cost the client a lot of money.

(N.B. For those interested in reading the full text of the US court decision, please log on at <http://www.lawprofessorblogs.com/taxprof/linkdocs/longtermcap.pdf>)



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Develop a succession line of brand champions

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

AN often unrecognized source of a brand's eventual decline and failure is the lack of a succession of brand champions whose main task is to protect a brand's equity, forever nurture and rightly grow, expand, diversify or leverage a brand's strength, while at the very least maintain its dominant market position.

This is because a number of founders of businesses, content with their present portfolio of brand successes abruptly retire from the business they have built without putting in place a succession line of brand champions and mechanisms around their brands.

Two of the classic marketing cases of failure of succession include the New Coke and the Howard Johnson (HOJO) brand of restaurants and hotels.

Coke, in the 1880s launched the entirely new cola category. Throughout the century and into the next, Coca Cola capitalized on its first and original status in most of its advertising campaigns, aptly summed up in a powerful creative expression, "It's the real thing". Unfortunately, sometime in 1980s, Coke faced a number of challenges including a pointedly offensive attack from its bitter rival, Pepsi, who mounted notably successful campaigns like the Pepsi Challenge and Pepsi Generation. This was followed by the untimely demise of the Coke brand's long-time caretaker, CEO Robert Woodruff and was not helped any by a new and mostly foreign-born top management.

Thus, it was not surprising that the management team perceived the battle between the colas to come down to simply product taste preference. This led to the New Coke that made obsolete the original formula. It was like telling the American public that the "original real thing" was not the real thing after all. And that was when Coke sales really began to flounder. A month after the announcement of the New Coke in April 1985, the soda company received a daily average of 8,000 negative phone calls. When Coke management decided to bring back the old formula and relaunch the Coke Classic in June 1985, it got 18,000 friendly phone calls a day.

In July 11, 1985, at a press conference, then CEO Roberto Goizueta had to admit, "We have heard you." Its COO, Donald Keough went on and said, "the passion for original Coca Cola and that is the word for it, passion was something that caught us by surprise.... a wonderful American mystery, a lovely American enigma."

Pepsi's CEO, Roger Enrico, in his book, "The Other Guy Blinked," succinctly remarked, "I think by the end of their nightmare, they figured out who they really are. Caretakers. They can't change the taste of their flagship brand. They can't change its imagery. All they can do is defend the heritage they nearly abandoned in 1985."

HOJO

The Howard Johnson's restaurant chain and family hotels was one of the best known and successful American franchises in the post war era with over 400 restaurants and motor lodges visible with their bright orange roofs along America's roadside. At the height of the brand's success in the '50s, Howard Johnson Sr. abruptly retired and decided in 1959 to leave the business in the hands of his 26-year-old son, Howard Brennon Johnson. The same year that the elder Johnson turned over the organization, J. Willard Marriot Jr. hoped that the business he would inherit from his father would be successful as HOJO's.

Two decades later, Marriott Hotel had surpassed Howard Johnson by more than seven times. J. Willard Marriott Sr. had indoctrinated his son and rightfully passed on the brand's core ideology over time. On the other hand, the brand of Howard Johnson restaurant chain and motor lodges coasted in the hands of its young successor, eventually being sold off to the Imperial Group PLC of Great Britain and then passed on to another set of new owners. Today, it is owned and managed by Hospitality Franchise Systems. Hopefully it is on its road to recovery.

This article lists some ways of developing a succession line of brand champions and mechanisms.

Develop the brand's mission and core ideology. Every brand must have a charter that summarizes its identity, its reason for being, as well as unique value proposition, purpose and mission while not excluding personality and core values. A good brand charter has a well-defined personality that guides the marketing execution and communication of the brand. This means describing in a separate, short paragraph the brand as if one were describing a real person. If the brand were to come alive as person, who would it be, who would it be like, who would it talk to, who would its friends be, etc.

The brand, 3M has a precise brand mission statement captured in its brand charter, "Innovative and practical solutions from a diversified technology company." Thus, the company's products that include post-its, abrasives, adhesives, etc. while seemingly diverse have relevance in the brand's product portfolio when evaluated against the brand charter.

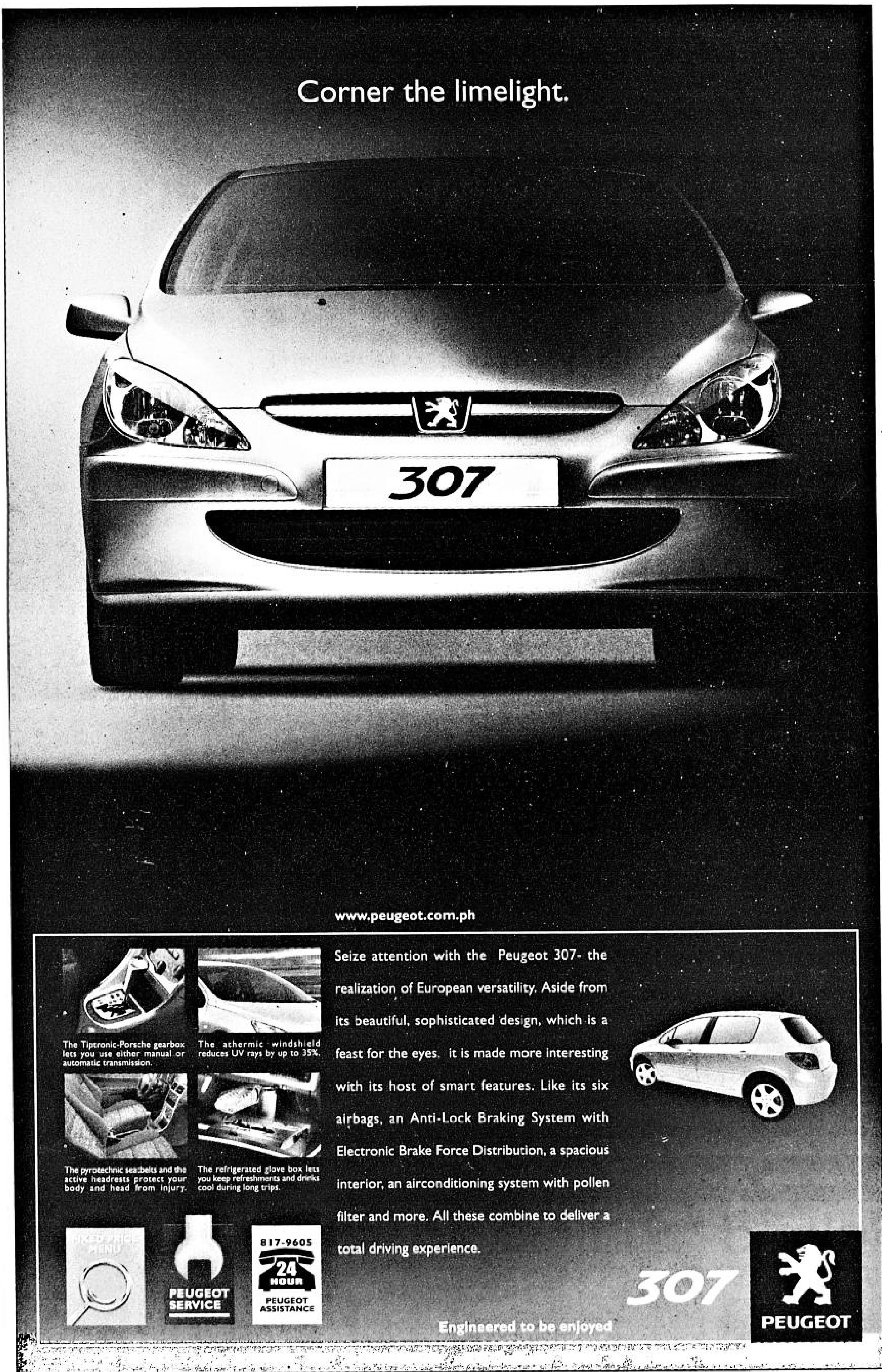
Marlboro has a well-defined brand personality statement that has helped the brand transcend restrictions to its product and enter new markets and categories like men's clothing and accessories. Its brand personality statement reads, "Marlboro is a full-flavored cigarette that imbues strength, masculinity and independence and represents the rugged individualist of all times who is not afraid to stand alone."

Begin with your employees' buy-in. One part is to have the brand charter. The second part is to institutionalize, live and re-live the brand charter. Much of marketing is externally directed to customers in the so-called business or consumer market. Most fail to recognize the customers within, the internal market comprised of employees and other stakeholders including the new recruits. Sustaining a brand's success is the hardest part but this can be overcome if there is a buy-in from the employees. Sell the brand inside is the motto of successful marketers. And they begin with the all-too excited, all-too happy new hires that listen enthusiastically to the brand's stories.

Disney has a rigid succession mechanism and indoctrination program that does not stop at the regular employee orientation of company rules, policies, benefits, etc. All employees attend a Disney Tradition Orientation seminar where the vision of its founder Walt Disney, his most famous Disney characters and the ideology behind the brand are shared in videos, history and mythology. Disney publications including annual reports use Disney language—where else can you find words like dreams, imagination, fun and magic mixed with conventional business terms like return on investment, plant facilities and capital? Winning new and old employees' buy-in to the brand is the best advertising an organization can ever have.

Foster a work environment that understands and loves the brand with a passion. Nordstrom does not pay lip service to a brand charter that says that the number one goal is

DEVELOP B2-7



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BEA Zobel visits Navotas fish port /C2

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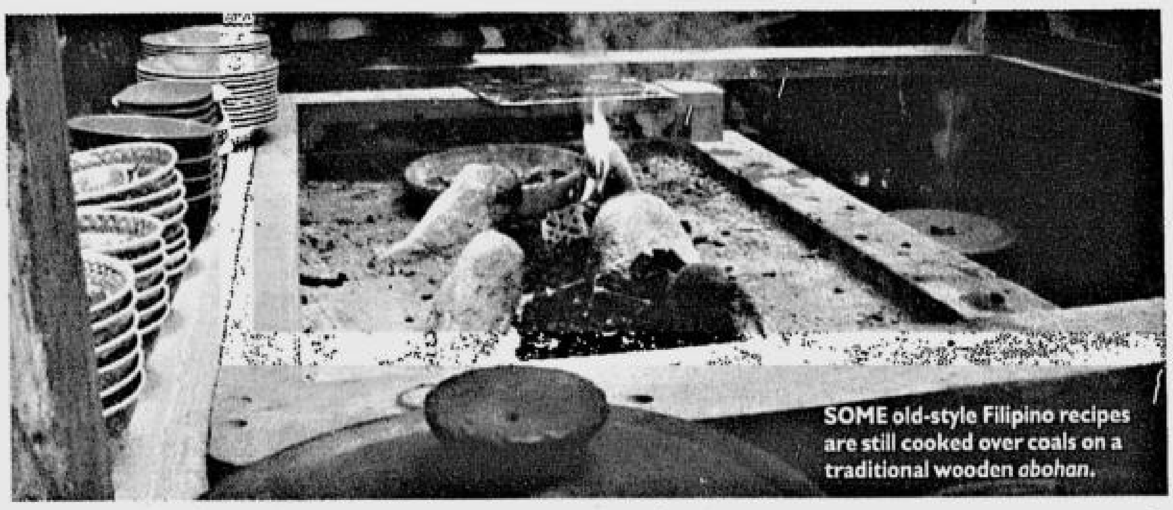


SOME old-style Filipino recipes are still cooked over coals on a traditional wooden *abohan*.

SALUD! Bistro in Baguio City was recently nominated by the readers of Tatler Magazine as one of the best restaurants in the country.

Not one to rest on his laurels, chef Paul Poblador recently opened his second establishment, Kusina Salud, in rural Barangay Santa Cruz, San Pablo City, Laguna.

Kusina Salud is on a wooded barrio road off the main highway at the outskirts of the city. A short wooden bridge of the vanishing kind (heritage that the engineers and contractors of the Department of Public Works and Highways love replacing with ugly concrete monsters) is the landmark to look for.

Just past the bridge and hidden from the road is the weekend home of Tito and Patis Tesoro, a magical place they now share with the public as the setting of the new Kusina Salud.

What Patis had planted on their property years ago has matured into a man-made jungle. A profusion of bamboo, fruit trees, vines and ferns grow into a dense tropical rainforest whose leaves diffuse sunlight into rays that bounce off the vegetation before reaching the ground.

This is a place to reconnect with nature.

The refreshing sound of water is everywhere, coming from the many fountains on the property or from a stream that bubbles its way at the bottom of a steep drop behind the house hidden by thick foliage.

The house is so cocooned in its luxuriant tropical setting that rainforest and house appear to have coexisted forever, a testimony of how Patis greatly conceptualized and pieced everything together.

Patis' vision goes beyond ordinary bounds. She fearlessly takes colors, textures and patterns and then mixes, juxtaposes, contrasts, combines, layers, overlays and underlays everything.

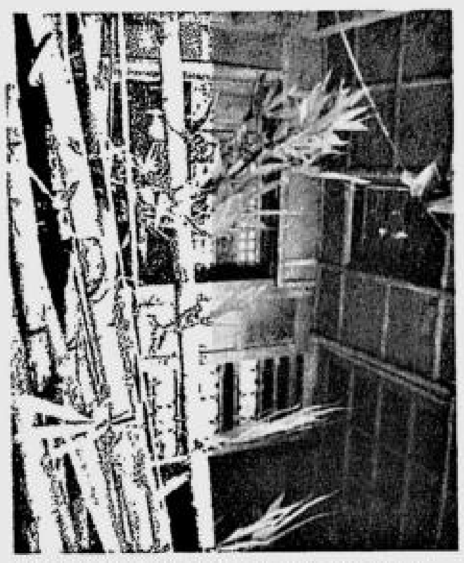
Visual excess

She takes visual excess straight to its upper limits, to a level bordering on sensory overload. Minimalist the place is not. It is filled to capacity. The feel is baroque, folk, and jeepney, the design approach so traditionally and delightfully Filipino.

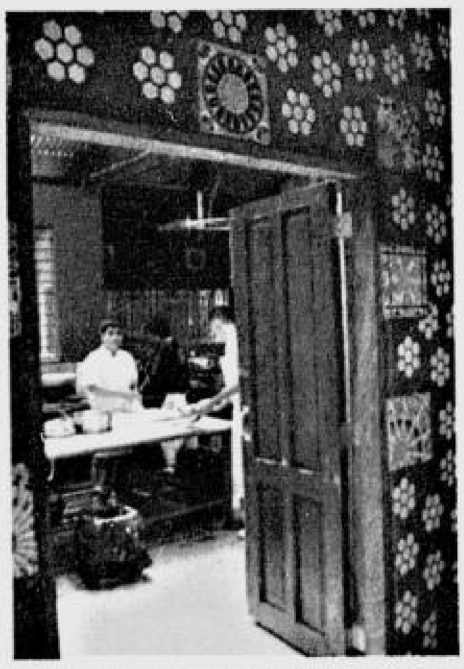
The way the house and garden look is familiar, deeply striking Filipino memory chords to remind with nostalgia of childhood houses in the province. Surely none of those houses could have come close to matching the opulence of this one.

Each element in her house comes from somewhere else. Recycled lumber left with its

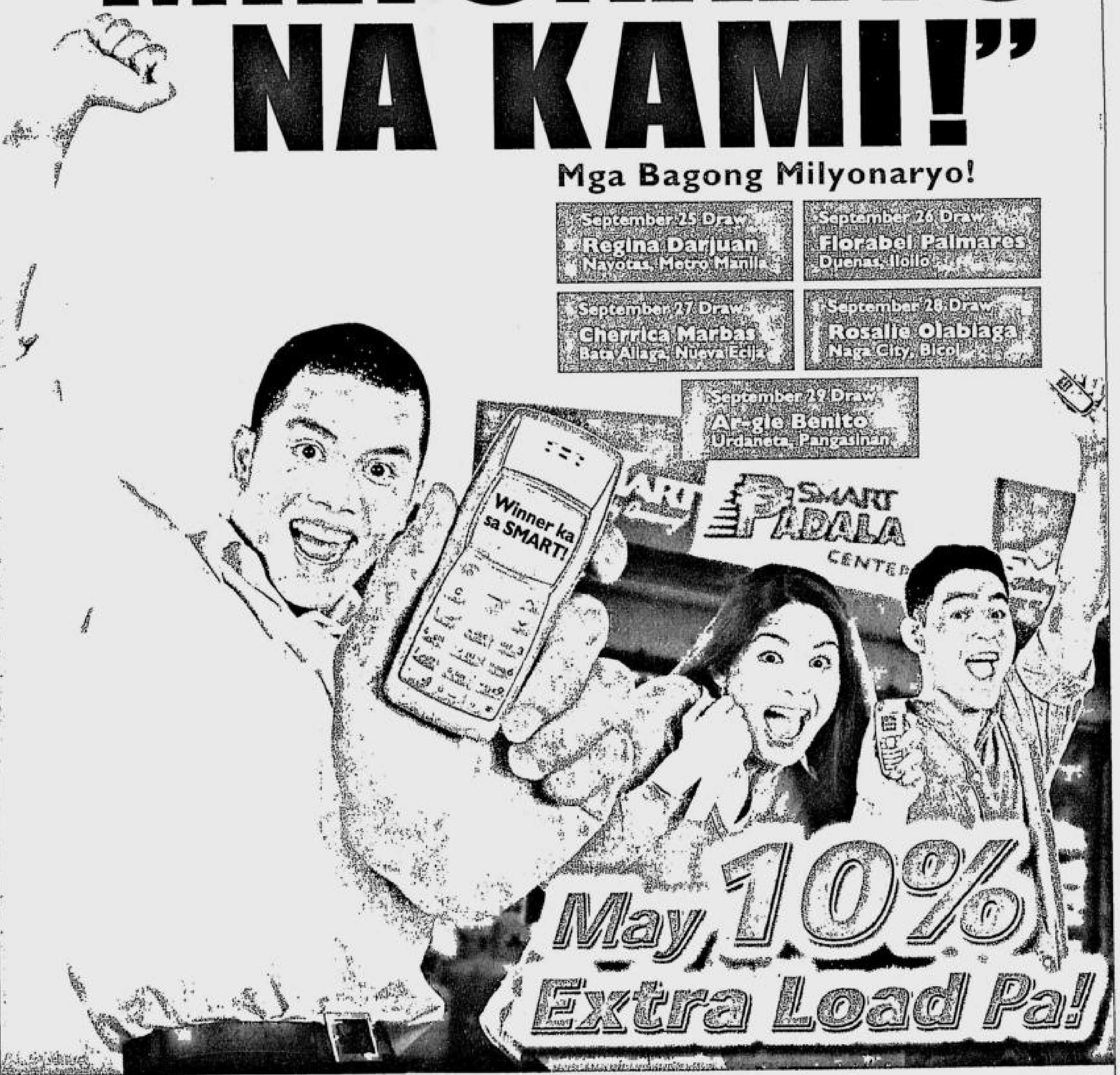
SALUD!/ C2



FRAMED by a giant bamboo, the exterior walls combine antique fretwork (*calado*) and wooden balusters, *capiz* windows, while the bamboo stripping on the walls suggests traditional lime stucco (*paletada*) work.



A MASSIVE wooden door salvaged from a demolished house opens through a multi-patterned wall to the kitchen.



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THE MANY creatures of the sea...

THE *BAÑERAS* of fish

ALL smiles, a lady holds a *gancho*.

Something fishy

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

AS I went to the supermarket this afternoon, I couldn't help but glance at the fish section. I felt rather smug. The fish I had bought that morning was probably fresher than what was on sale.

I also knew now where all the fish being sold in the market came from. For I had been to the Navotas fish port, the source of much of the seafood sold throughout Metro Manila.

Now, don't get the wrong idea. I am not about to rush over to the fish port every time I want to cook a nice *sinigang*.

This is because all the action takes place in the wee hours of the morning. I had to get up at 2 a.m.! So don't think that I am going to get into the seafood retail business!

Navotas is about 10 km north of Manila, right on the shores of the great Bay. Like its sister town Malabon, it is located on an island. This island was supposedly formed when the sea ate away at the land, forming a hole or *butas*.

Getting there, you drive past Smokey Mountain. I noticed the mounds are now covered with grass. You wonder where all the garbage is being dumped these days.

Arriving at Navotas, we were greeted by our hosts, Aling Coring Bumanlag and her son Raul. It was really early in the morning, but they met us with the warmest smiles. I would learn later on that this easygoing warmth is something that comes naturally in Navotas.

The fish port was incredible! There was so much energy. Everyone was absorbed in a myriad of tasks—haggling, shouting, lifting, loading, unloading, shoveling ice. Everyone was there for a purpose, there was no time to waste.

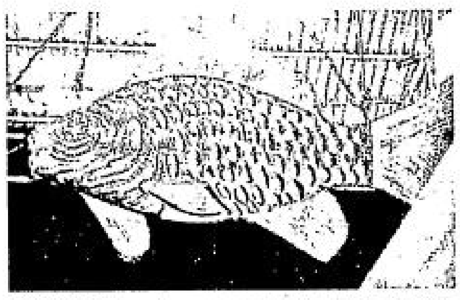
Yet, as soon as the flash from my camera lit up the scene, wow, everyone stopped and posed!

Yes, I had no difficulty getting people to smile for the camera. For a place that is supposed to be full of fish, I never expected to encounter so many hams!

As if the racket wasn't loud enough, somebody kept on exploding firecrackers. It was like a New Year's party in a sardine factory!

Yet there was method to all this madness. The fish port runs on a system of *consignaciones*. This is what you call the middle tradespeople who buy the catch from the fishermen and then sell them wholesale to the vendors. The vendors then sell the catch retail in the different markets of Metro Manila. The *consignacion* representatives are usually seated on stools overlooking the metal bins (called *bañeras*) of fish.

The vendors employ an interesting technique when bidding for the catch. They whisper their price to the *consignacion* so no one else hears their bid. This is called the *bulungan*.



METAL fish welcomes you to the Navotas fish port.

MY gracious hosts, the Bumanlag family

When the *consignacion* hears the amount that is music to his ears, he then acknowledges the bid by writing it down on paper. The deal is on! To show that the matter is closed, the piece of paper is placed on top of the fish.

The fish port is a world in itself. It has its own terms and institutions. There are the terms for the instruments of the trade such as *pinga*, the bamboo strip from which hang the baskets of fish as they are carried around the market.

There is also the *gancho*, the metal hook that is used to pull the *bañeras*, the metal bins full of the fresh catch. *Punduhan* is the local term for the fish depot. "*Nakasara*" refers to a pre-arranged price that has been fixed even before the fish are unloaded.

I also noticed that the women wore these huge apron-like overskirts. These protect the clothes from all the fishy mess as well as carry all the cash in big pockets.

What an incredible array of fish! Even though I am a diver, I don't think I have ever seen so many kinds! There were the usual *lapu-lapu* and tuna, but there were also parrot fish, *espadas*, eels, *mamengs*, squid and crabs.

Sadly, there were also endangered species like manta rays. One can only hope that these fish weren't caught through destructive means that ruin our coral reefs.

There was a bewildering range of clams as well as seaweed. A friend of mine pointed out that many Filipino terms for fish involve repetition: *lapu-lapu, maya-maya and hasa-hasa*.

There is one case where the name has the same syllable appearing three times! Do you know what fish I'm talking about? Give up? It's 555. Okay, okay, it's a brand of sardines!

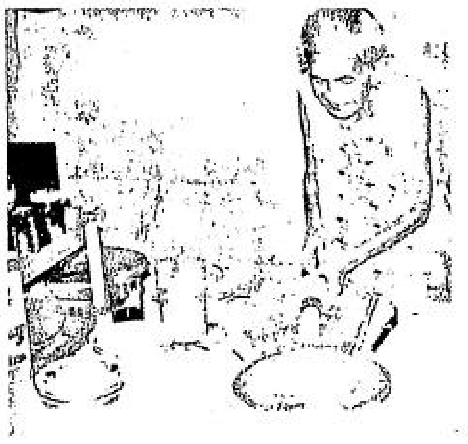
We ended the day having breakfast at the Bumanlag home. The house is so well designed because Raul is an architect.

Aling Coring has been selling fish since 1960. It is a trade she learned from her mother. She heads everyday for the *punduhan* really early in the morning to make sure she misses nothing. She makes her choices and then transports everything all the way to her stall in Sta Cruz.

Meanwhile, her husband is the one who stays home to take care of the kids. I was told this is usually the case with many Navotas households.

MAN posing with a bamboo *pinga*

Navotas is simply incredible. Full of energy, it is a town of sounds and sights



ALING Truding preparing our *puto sulot* at 4:30 a.m.

The Bumanlag couple brought up eight wonderful children through their labors. Hard work and warm family values have resulted in a gracious home that was welcoming to our ragged bunch so early in the morning.

The senior Mr. Bumanlag even serenaded us by playing a selection of Filipino music on the stereo.

For breakfast, we had delicious fried fish (bought in the *punduhan*), *champurado, itlog na pula, pan de sal* and the local specialty, *puto sulot*. This last was bought hot and comforting from a stall down the street ran by Aling Tuding (that's short for Gertrudes).

Puto sulot is cooked in tubes like *puto bumbong*, but it is made from white *malagkit*. The bamboo tubes where the *puto* is steamed are poked with a long instrument to push out the white cakes, hence the name "*sulot*."

This wonderful delicacy is just one of the many things that make Navotas a unique and bustling place. I am told there are other indigenous industries like *patis*- and *bagoong*-making, shipbuilding and net-weaving.

If there is anything that is truly amazing about the Navotas *punduhan*, it is the incredible energy. It is in places like these that one feels the pulse and power of our nation—not to mention the good humor!

Sharing a little of this life is such a privilege and makes working on my column worth it.

Let's remember this and thank all the wonderful people who work so hard to bring that fish to our plate!

Salud! to down-home . . .

From page C1

THE HOUSE cocoons into the lush tropical Philippine jungle that surrounds it.

INSIDE out, the house is a recycled patchwork of parts from old houses joined into a multi-textured quilt.

original paint patchworks into interior partitions punctuated with massive hardwood doors probably from a *bahay na bato* somewhere.

Set above antique balusters of rare tropical wood, old *capiz* windows are reused and set off by heavy iron grilles forged generations ago.

Carved wooden fretwork (*calado*) salvaged from old houses reappears above walls, setting off windows, and unconventionally as perforated wall material that casts patterned sunlight on her polished bamboo floors, giving an embroidered texture to the space.

Chinese carpets combine with silk upholstery, pillows covered in handwoven *patadyong* cloth from Iloilo, crocheted bedspreads in delicious ice-cream colors, all set off by gossamer mosquito netting.

There is nothing static about this house. It is a house of surprises that offers so many things to catch the eye. Although the amount of detail staggers, the diverse designs, colors, shapes and textures manage to come together smoothly.

Under the bamboo flooring of the sleeping quarters above, the *silong* (ground floor) of the house is now Kusina Salud. The first thing that catches the eye are the bright red and gold Chinese damask napkins set on tables covered with a collection of unmatched tablecloths.

Exhibits

At Kusina Salud, the artwork on the walls, tables and garden nooks are all for sale. A season of exhibits is in the works. Right now there are metal sculpture, antique Filipiniana etchings from Europe, and local pottery.

There is organically grown rice, and from the garden there are potted herbs, plants and organic fertilizer to bring home.

In the future, a separate building will house craft and antique shops. It is going to be quite a place to go to.

What about the food at Kusina Salud? For nationalists like Tito and Patis Tesoro (she singlehandedly brought back not only the forgotten *baro't saya* traditionally worn by women but also revived vanished weaving skills to handloom material for her revitalized Filipino wear), the cuisine could not be anything else but Filipino.

Kusina Salud cuisine evokes memories. It is familiar on the palate but flavors blend unexpectedly with the creativity of its chefs.

On the menu is hearty everyday cooking with the flavors and textures that spell comfort food to the Filipino palate. But the cooking is notches above the everyday. It is sophisticated country cooking that ensures only the freshest country produce makes its way into the kitchen.

Since most of the ingredients are organic and grown on the premises, there is less guilt from over-indulging, which is so easy to do at Kusina Salud.

Chefs Paul Poblador and Bho Sorrera serve the ultimate *lutong bahay* that is nothing like what we cook at my home, so to get more fixes of their good stuff I expect to make frequent trips to Tito and Patis' bahay in San Pablo for good old Kusina Salud comfort.

Kusina Salud is an hour and a half drive south of Manila. Dining hours are 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. and from 5:30-10 p.m. Reservations recommended. Contact kusinasalud@yahoo.com or call 0921-772-6985 or 049-246-6878 in San Pablo. In Manila call 726-5058/59.

E-mail feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

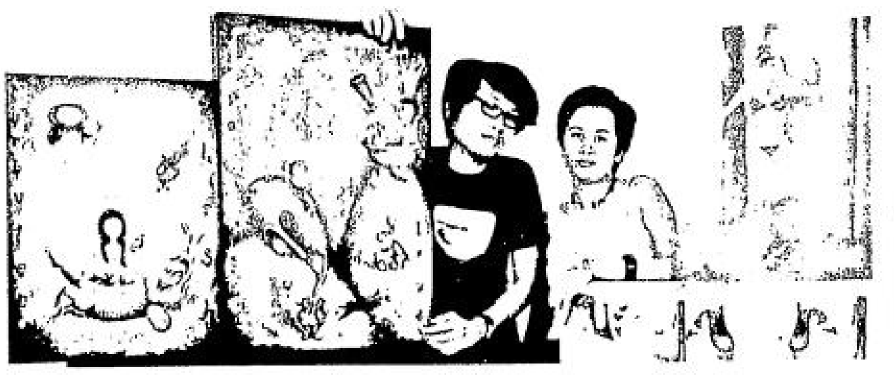
Velasco women in unique family show

THE GALERIE Astra will mount "Mag-iina," the family exhibit of best-selling artist Lydia Velasco and her daughters, Chie and Chigo, on Oct. 8.

Lydia is noted for her searing figures of women in earthly-rich and powerful colors. Chigo studied fine arts at UP Diliman and won a mixed media prize at the Art Association Philippines annual art contest last year. Chie is taking up her master's at UP and is noted for her sculptures.

The show runs until Oct. 22. Astra is at the second floor of the LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St. (formerly Reposo), Bel-Air II, Makati. Call 8903988 or 7269015.

LYDIA Velasco and daughters Chie and Chigo



CRIST Espiritu and Janet Balbarona

'Polyester Love' at Astra

"POLYESTER Love," an exhibition by Crist Espiritu and Janet Balbarona on Galerie Astra, focuses on the dilemmas of modern-day relationships.

Espiritu is a young emerging artist who has garnered several awards from Metrobank and Shell.

His surreal works are rocket rides through various emotions of love, lust, melancholy and boredom, showing his delightfully twisted perception of life as "...a big party on a cannibalistic playground."

Also an award-winning artist, Balbarona's works often show solitary female figures contorted in the oddest positions, juxtaposed with several often-unrelated objects that imply subtexts.

"Polyester Love" runs until Oct. 7 at Galerie Astra (LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo St.) Bel Air II, Makati City). Call 8903988, 7243032 or 7269015.

Art auction to benefit breast cancer sufferers

ARACELI Dans

"EVERY week or every month," ceramics maker Lanelle Abueva-Fernando says, "I would hear of a friend or a relative who'd fall ill..." She then made a list of her friends stricken with the illness. Easily, she came up with a list of seven.

The illness is cancer.

Abueva-Fernando is just one of 15 Filipina artists participating in an exhibit cum auction marking the third year of Avon's "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" (KGBC) campaign.

The event, titled "Uncovering Life," has gathered 12 women from diverse fields—to serve as the artists' muses for their works.

The works will be featured in an art exhibit-auction today at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Manila Peninsula. Its goal is to generate funds to support chemotherapy treatments of selected indigent patients of the PGH Breast Care Center.

For years, Avon has been at the forefront of the crusade against breast cancer, raising more than $250 million in the process. In 2002, Avon launched the global fundraising program "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer," an initiative involving the donation of a specific amount for every lipstick sold in a given period.

In the Philippines, the proceeds of the last two years were used to build the PGH Breast Care Center, purchase a mammography machine, an ultrasound machine, and support salaries and medical supplies.

Aside from Abueva-Fernando, the other artists participating are Agnes Arellano, Ivi Avellana-Cosio, Julie Lluch Dalena, Araceli Limcaco-Dans, Imelda Cajipe-Endaya, Nona Garcia, Honey Huertas, Jeannie Javelosa, Pauline Lee, Impy Pilapil, Susan Fetalvero-Roces, Lia Torralba, Lydia Velasco and Janice Liuson-Young.

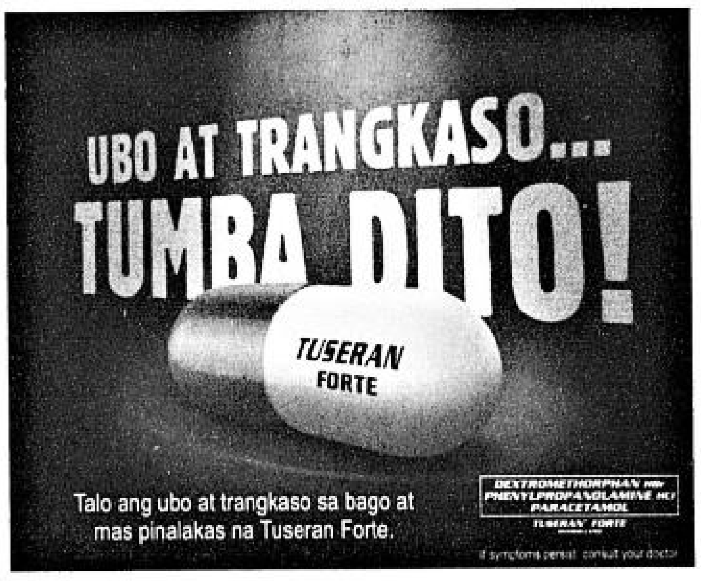
The 12 survivors, on the other hand, are former senator Eva Estrada-Kalaw, environmentalist Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, artist Lydia Paredes, journalists Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala and Ann Montemar-Oriondo, economist Cristina David, educator Carol Porio, neurosurgeon Ma. Socorro Martinez, corporate executive Linda Panutat, flight attendant Gay Gomez, video communicator Meryl Graham-Schlachterman, and children's and women's cause advocate Dulce Saguisag. Noted photographer Jun de Leon will add drama to the event with his black-and-white portraits of these awesome women.

Using the medium of their choice, the artists created art pieces inspired by the winning traits of these survivors, such as forgiveness, fortitude, generosity, perseverance and patience.

If you wish to support this worthy cause by bidding for an artwork, call 8642670 to 73.

LANELLE Abueva-Fernando

IMELDA Cajipe Endaya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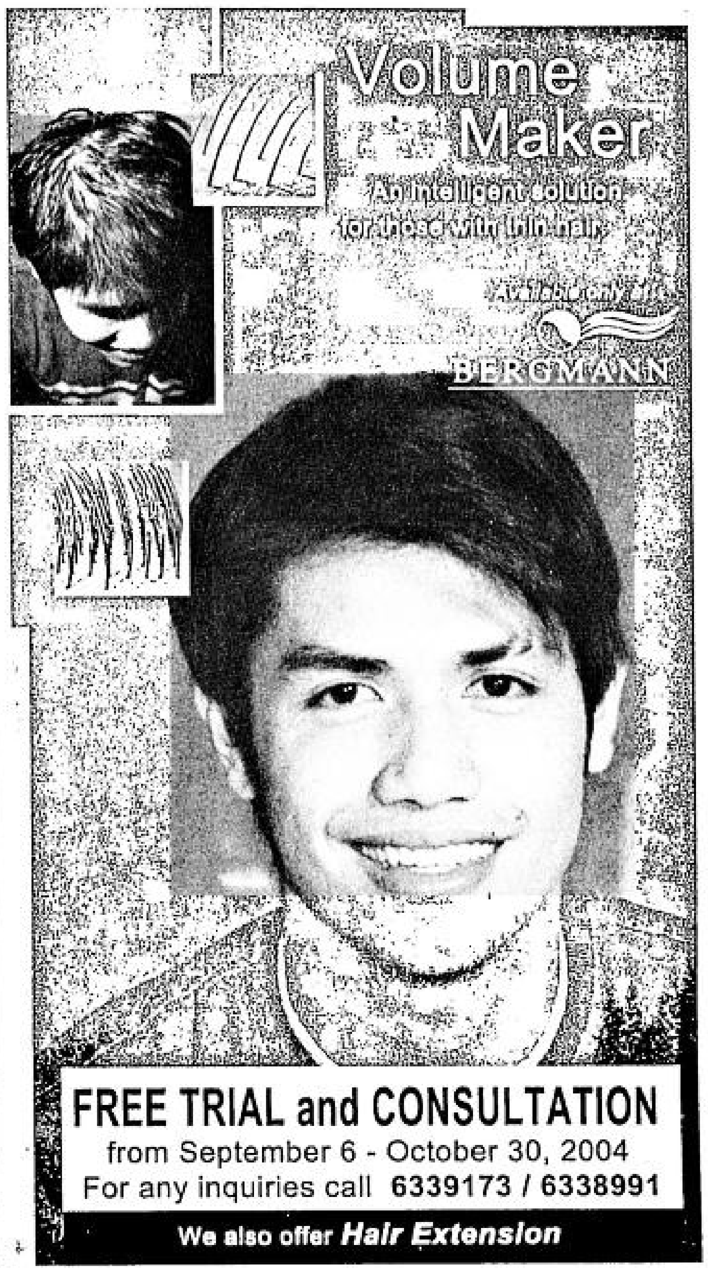
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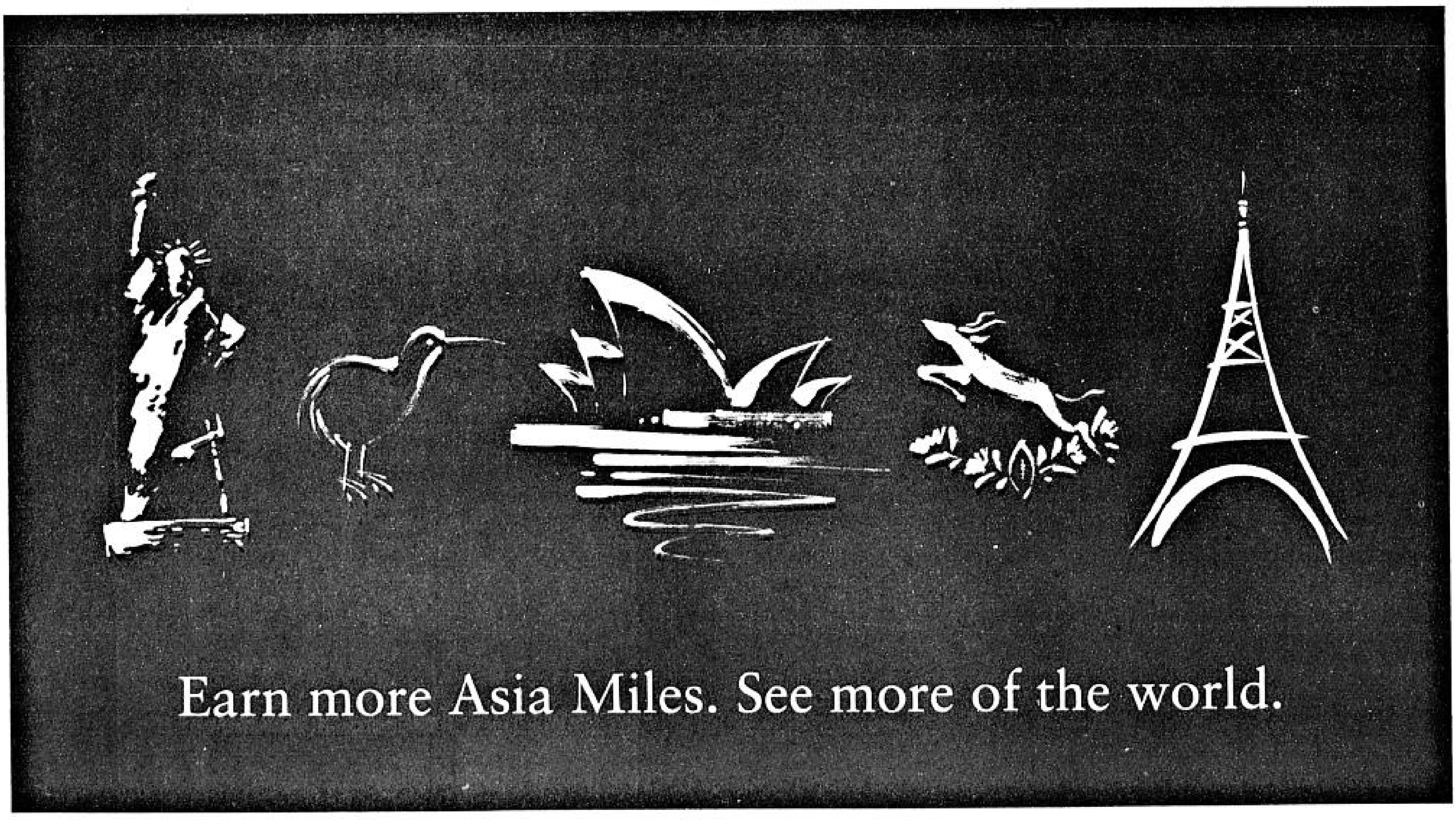
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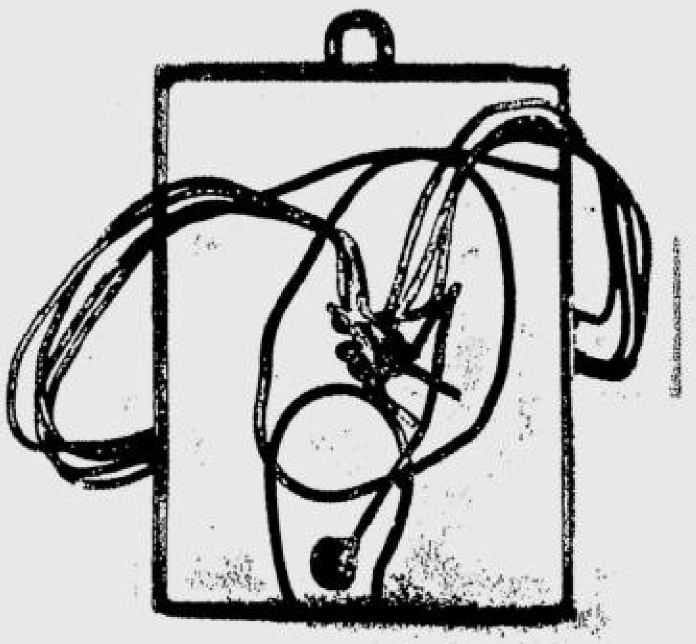


"PORTRAIT"

By Constantino C. Tejero

LOOK what an artist can do with bare essentials, simple machines and spare materials.

With just his hands and hammer, Pete Jimenez forms metal into witty representations, shaping steel round bars into line drawings or doodles in space, welding the bars on to a base of steel slab or leaf spring to create freestanding sculptures. It is really basic metalwork.

"They call it direct sculpture," says Jimenez.

Some 20 of these pieces are showcased in his sixth solo exhibit "Wired," until Oct. 5 in West Gallery at the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Jimenez's ability to capture the character or personality of a subject with minimal broad strokes, using steel bars to draw the outline, shows a virtuoso draftsmanship. The lines are allusive and playful, each piece a veritable visual pun.

The viewer experiences the shock of recognition upon seeing those thick wires of gray metal wrought into curling wisps of steam in "Freshly Brewed" and the "Mug Shot" series; brittle uncooked noodles compacted into blocks in "Instant Pancit Canton" and "Instant Mami"; the hulls and sails in the "Banca" series; the ears of Roger Rabbit; the ruffled hair of the hag in "Bruha Ka!"

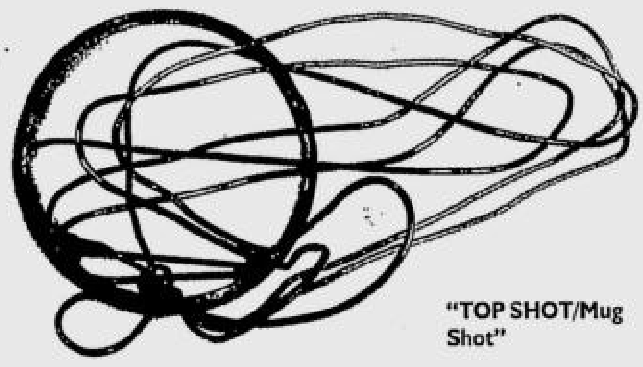
The pieces referring to photographs—"Multiple Exposure" and two series called "Portraits" and "Photo Session"—are quasi-abstract, that is, almost unrecognizable, but the viewer won't miss the underlying wit. "Photo Session" is notable for the delicacy of each frame, while "Multiple Exposure" has a weird elegance.

"MULTIPLE Exposure"

Jimenez took up Fine Arts, major in Visual Communications, at the University of the Philippines. He admires the works of Juan Alcazaren and Bernardo Pacquing.

His art-making has had a somewhat linear development. Starting with representational paintings, doing a series on windows, then shifting to semiabstract bottles, he turned to abstraction. He began seriously sculpting only in 1999.

"*Mahilig talaga akong maglaro ng* found objects since college, especially those with odd shapes," he says. "Rock Drilon was the one who encouraged me to sculpt. He told me, '*I-*consider *mo. Paglaruan mo'*... Sculpture is very spontaneous. *Parang nagku-*collage *lang ako.* With painting, I'd drag myself to get a canvas. *Hahatakin mo sarili mo.*"



"TOP SHOT/Mug Shot"

He is particularly fascinated by the metalwork of Spanish artist Julio Gonzalez. "He taught Picasso how to weld metal," he adds.

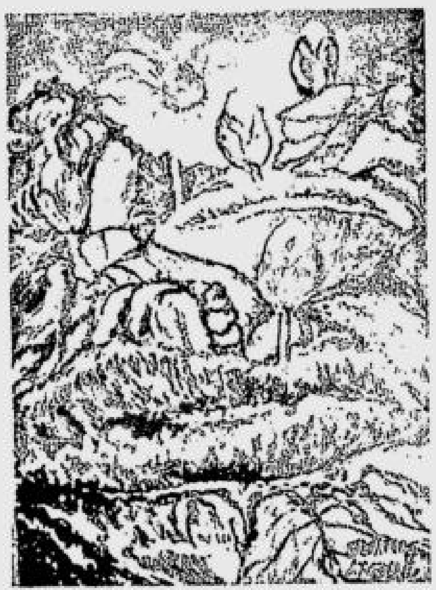
Metal is the medium he is most comfortable with, and so Gonzalez's direct sculpture directly inspired his art. "*Nahirapan ako mag-*shape *ng* wood and stone in college. *Mas gusto ko* spontaneous."

For material, he visits certain junk shops in Antipolo and Mandaluyong. For this exhibit, he found the round bars (used to bind I-beams together) in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

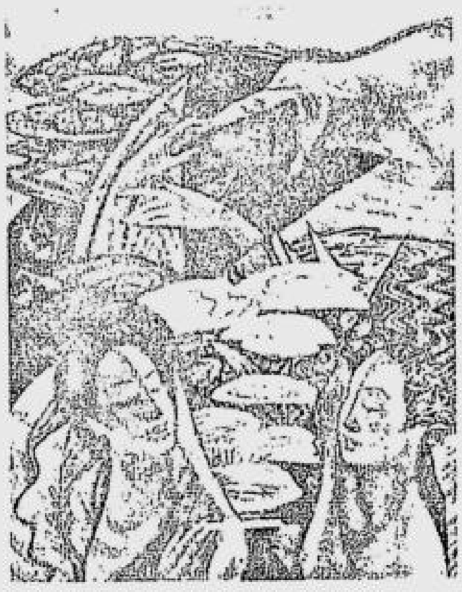
After creating a piece, he places it in his garden to expose it to the elements. After two weeks, it acquires a layer of rust, and this he brushes over with acid (the rust-remover Turco) to achieve the texture and color he wants. The moment he likes what he sees, he arrests the spontaneous oxidation by coating the piece with polyurethane.

He says that next time he'd want to experiment with painted steel. We've seen what he can do with line, let's see what he can do with color.

Quintet of artists



"LIMPE'S Lily Pond," by Julius Limpe



DIWATA: "Tatlong Maria," by Fil Delacruz

TOP artists Fil Delacruz, Raul Isidro, Julius Limpe, Romulo Olazo and Al Perez have banded together and called themselves "Dilop." They will show their recent works at The Podium on Oct. 6.

Isidro and Olazo are senior abstractionists who have experimented with various media and techniques.

Isidro is the president of the Philippine Association of Printmakers; he has done monoprints and abstract paintings such as his Mother Earth series. Olazo is primarily associated with diaphanous paintings based on the collograph technique.

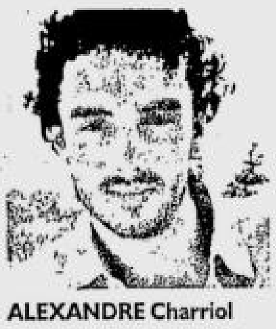
Delacruz is the renowned graphic artist working particularly in mezzotint and lithograph. He has lately dabbled in oil pastel on handmade paper.

Limpe is an expressionist painter who is better known for his renderings of various tropical fishes and colorful pond life. Perez is famous for his work on old Philippine churches and has experimented with collage done in an abstract expressionist style.

The show will run until Oct. 12. Call 3618773.

DELACRUZ, Isidro, Olazo, Perez and Limpe

"Encounters" at Ayala Museum



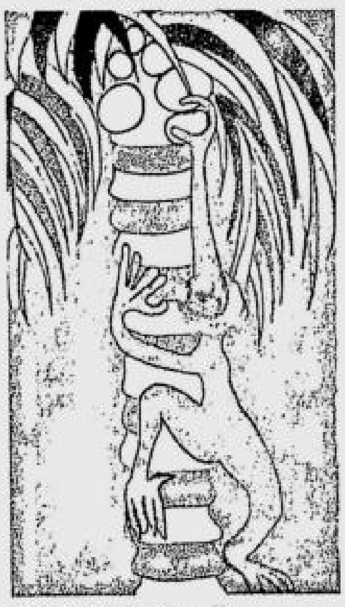
ALEXANDRE Charriol

ALEXANDRE Charriol's rightful place is among luxury watches, jewelry and accessories, being heir to the global fashion empire that his parents, Philippe and Annick Charriol, have built. Instead, he has opted for a career in the fine arts.

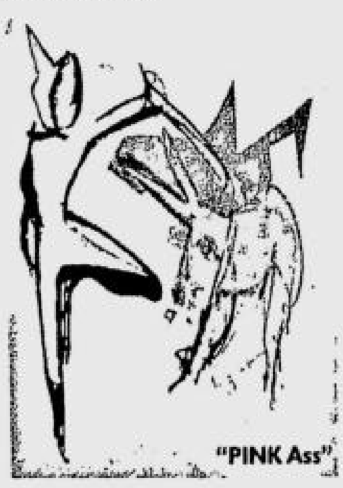
On Oct. 11, Manilans will have a chance to experience his artistry and creativity with an exhibit of his paintings at the Ayala Museum titled "Encounters."

A graduate of the Parsons School of Design in New York, Charriol says the inspiration for his art "comes from everyday events filtered by my own subconscious. I believe that art is an individual experience. Trust what you feel."

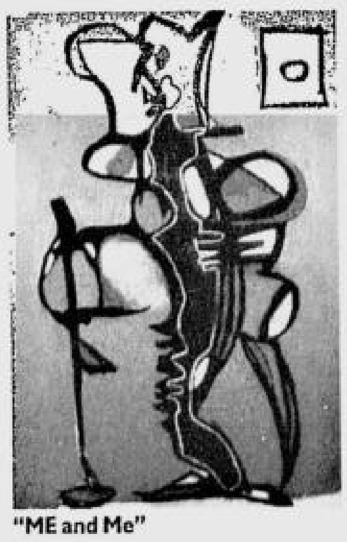
The artist has had a number of shows since 1999, beginning at the Sydney Muse in London. In 2002, he had shows at Le Bilboquet in New York, the Studio 4-G also in New York, the Philippe Charriol Foundation in Hong Kong, Museum of Fine Arts annual auctions in New York, and Exposures Heidi Lee Fine Art in New York.



"MONKEY Business"



"PINK Ass"



"ME and Me"

Diaz at Heritage, De la Cruz at Art Elements, Marian art at Rustan's

VISUAL ARTS

YOUNG artist J.R. Diaz will open his seventh solo, "Destiny," on Oct. 7 at the Heritage Art Center (SM Megamall). The 22 paintings in oil and acrylic on canvas are brilliant expressions of religious themes, and abstractions of native Madonnas, mango vendors, nudes and musicians. There are also impressionist renditions of nature.

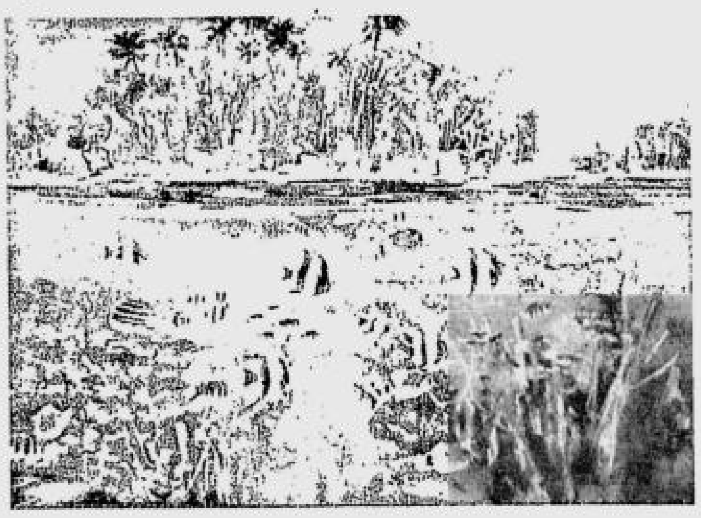
ABSTRACT artist Arthur de la Cruz is holding his sixth solo show at Art Elements (4/L, SM Megamall). "Quiet Journey" describes the painter's journey through life as he continues to assimilate and be confounded by the puzzling and juggling reality around him. The 18 works are mostly done in mixed media, and suffused with life's vivid colors and solid shapes. The show runs until Oct. 10. Call 6340203.

ARTS Unlimited presents "Aba Ginoong Maria Puno ng Grasya," an exhibit of Philippine Marian art at the 5/F, Rustan's Makati, Ayala Avenue. The exhibit presents depictions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in statuary, icons, prints, bas relief, retablos, handpainted tiles and Nativity sets in various media. The exhibit runs until Oct. 15.

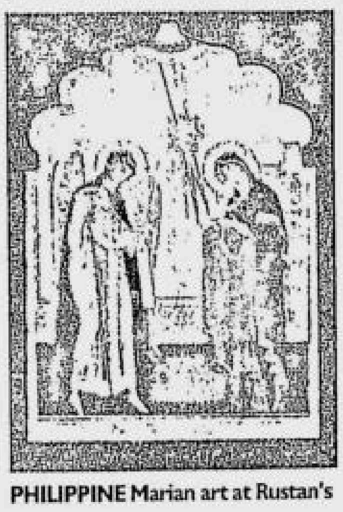
IN "WHIMSICAL Windows," on Oct. 12-27 in Galleria Duemila (SM Megamall), Phyllis Zaballero returns to a favorite motif—the window—and strikes a delicate balance between the representational and the abstract. The artist's hallmarks are sensuous colors and gestural marks. Call 6343261.

CULTURAL Center of the Philippines Pasilyo Vicente Manansala features "Birthpains" two-man exhibit by Gil Bien and Freddie Gonzales, Oct. 7-Nov. 7. Call 8323702.

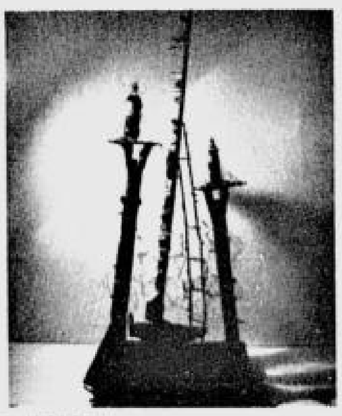
BOSTON Gallery presents recent paintings of Ruel Caasi and Jerson Samson until Oct. 20. Caasi's "Patak" is a collection of abstract monochrome paintings at the Upper Gallery. Samson's "Background" is a series of new works in oil on canvas works focused on the home's interiors. Boston Gallery is at 72 Boston St., Cubao. Call 7229205.



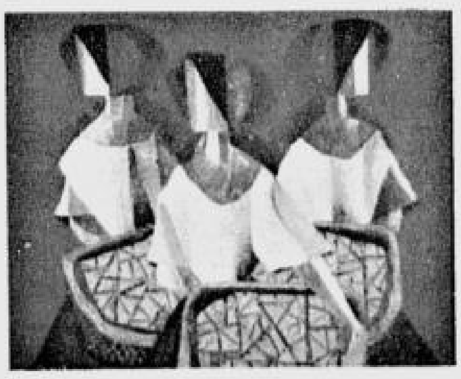
THE BROTHERHOOD of Christian Businessmen and Professionals sponsored an art exhibit featuring Arturo Luz, Tam Austria, Oscar Zalameda, Manny Baldemor, Nemiranda and Rafael Cusi (whose watercolor "Coral Reef" is shown at left). The exhibit raised funds for the family encounter program of the brotherhood.



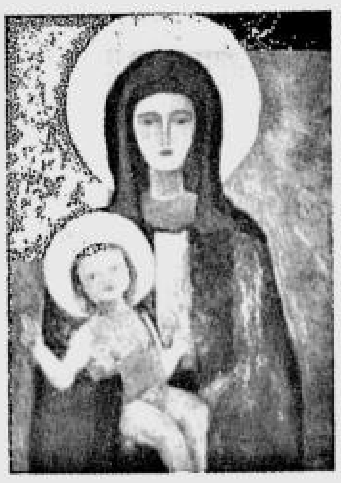
PHILIPPINE Marian art at Rustan's



"REDEMPTION," by Gil Bien



"MANGO Vendors Series 26," by JR Diaz

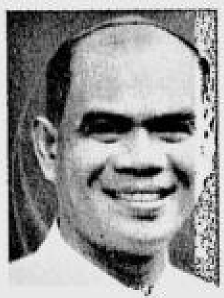


"IMMACULATE Mother," by Diaz

Passion for antiques and heritage

By James Earl G. Trinidad
Contributor

HENRY G. Babiera's penchant for arts and antiques is an inspiring tale of hard work, patience and commitment.



HENRY G. Babiera

Barely out of high school, he started collecting snap bottles that he bought for a measly P10, P20, or P30 each, using his savings from his allowance.

From bottles, he branched out to collecting plates, saucers and cups. "The unique kind," he emphasizes.

Little by little, he went to more evolved antique collecting. As a young seaman (he finished a maritime course), his ship would bring him to many foreign ports.'

"*Habang yung mga kasama ko naggu*-goodtime, *ako ay naghahanap ng mga* antique. *Hinahanap ko ay mga* gallery *at* art exhibit. *Bawat* antique *na binili ko ay inaalam ko ang kasaysayan*."

In large part, he attributes his heritage consciousness to the upbringing he got from his late journalist-father who, despite the financial hardship, didn't fail to impress upon his children the significance of learning and appreciating culture and heritage.

"It was a quantum leap for me," Babiera notes. "We may not be rich in material gain, but we are certainly rich in the things of the spirit. I hold on to my dreams, using my difficulties and weaknesses as my strength."

Now 48, Babiera has become a top antique collector. The secret, he says, is molding one's character, having intuition, vision and the desire to improve one's life.

"Every piece has its own life, a distinct history attached to it," he says about his collection.

Today, the former seaman is proud of his collection, consisting of over a hundred works of the Masters—Juan Luna, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Fabian de la Rosa—and contemporaries—Bencab, Onib Olmedo, Nena Saguil, Zalameda, Sanso, Manansala, Ocampo, etc.

His antiques include a centuries-old crucifix, an ivory Sto. Niño, and other sacred icons. He also has Ming Dynasty vases and Japanese furniture.

"The Philippines still has some of the best art and antique pieces, especially our paintings, because they have a global appeal," he says. "We are at par with Asian, European and American collections. Even the foreign market goes for our arts and antiquities."

Babiera laments, however, that Filipinos fail to appreciate their cultural patrimony. "We aren't conscious of our rich cultural heritage, unlike other nations that take care of their prized collections. We are not properly oriented, and perhaps because we are a poor nation. We have other priorities."

His own trade group, the Prime Asia Trade Planners and Convention Organizers, is holding the 11th National Arts and Antiques Show at the Greenhills Shopping Complex until Oct. 10.

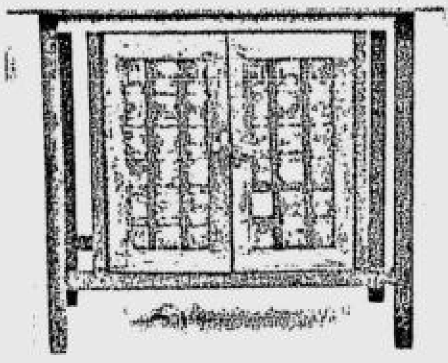
"I feel elated by people, mostly big names in the Industry, as well as students, office workers and shoppers, flocking to our exhibit that includes ancestral, tribal, modern, Western, turn-of-the-century furniture and furnishings," Babiera says.

With the same passion and intensity as when he was just starting with the snap-bottles collection 31 years ago, the Cotabato-born antique collector says he will continue to work so that Filipinos can appreciate and love their heritage.

BOWLS, vases, pots and paintings

CHINESE plates

OLD Philippine money



A NATIVE cabinet

Feng-shui art by Reyes

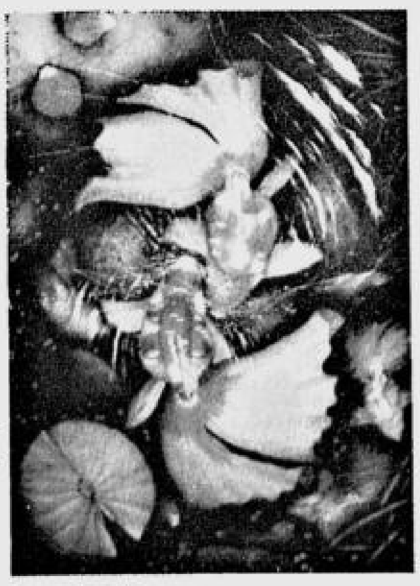
LEONARDO Reyes, opens his exhibit in Galerie Joaquin at The Podium on Oct. 7, at 7 p.m.

"A Touch of Gold" features 24 works showing the *ryukin* species of the goldfish family, and *koi*, the fish of choice of Asian royalty. Both varieties are symbolic of wealth, good luck and good fortune.

Reyes is presenting larger works this time. The show is his' invitation to good luck and good fortune as his works have many favorable feng-shui elements.

A graduate of the UP School of Fine Arts, Reyes has won major awards. He had worked and exhibited in Australia for almost a decade before coming back to the Philippines to devote his life to painting.

Call 7239253 and 6347954.



"PRELUDE"

SO WHAT COKE ARE YOU, REALLY?

Did you know that it's easy to tell someone's character by the things he or she likes? Take the quiz below and be surprised how much your taste tells a lot about who you are and, most of all, what Coke will best refresh you.

What would you wear on a big date?
A. A classy, all-black ensemble from top to toe
B. Whatever's loose and comfortable
C. Preppy silhouette that's dominantly neutrals
D. Body-hugging that will show your assets

Who are the artists on your CD rack?
A. Maroon 5, Alicia Keys
B. Hoobastank, Incubus
C. Dashboard Confessional
D. Ministry of Sound, Ibiza

What do you read?
A. Newspaper and novels
B. Independent titles
C. Comics and sci-fi
D. Magazines and self-help books

How do you like your steak?
A. Well-done
B. Rare
C. Medium-rare
D. I don't eat steak

What is your dream cell phone?
A. The less complicated, the better
B. Something that no one else has
C. With lots of games and software to operate
D. Streamlined, with lots of stylish covers

What's you dream car?
A. Anything that has four wheels and drive
B. SUV
C. Beetle
D. Porsche

How will you pose in your yearbook photo?
A. Something that mommy would hang on the wall
B. Wacky and crazy, with tongue sticking out
C. You really don't care
D. Glamorous, almost like a magazine photo shoot

Now, the fun part. Below is an assessment of your personality profile. Find out which one you are based on your answers above. As a bonus, we've also written down which Coca-Cola best describes and suits you. After all, there's nothing like grabbing a Coke that'll refresh you the way you want it to.

Mostly A's
You're a classic. Everyone finds it easy to talk to you, and you get along well with almost everybody. You find it easy to get new friends, even in the most unlikely places.

So to speak, you're like the Regular Coke. The one that everyone has always loved.

Mostly B's
You're on the wild side. You like to explore new places, and you love the outdoors. You find satisfaction in experimenting, and is happy knowing that there's always something different to do.

If you were a Coke, you'd be Cherry Coke. There's always a cherry wild side in you!

Mostly C's
You've got a lot going for you coz you've got it just right. You always see the fun side of things. Easy-going and humorous, surely no party will be the same without you.

You're definitely a Vanilla Coke—you have just the right touch of vanilla.

Mostly D's
You're ultra sophisticated. You always strive to improve yourself. You go to the gym, eat healthy food, because you know they're good for you. You're a New Age phenomenon!

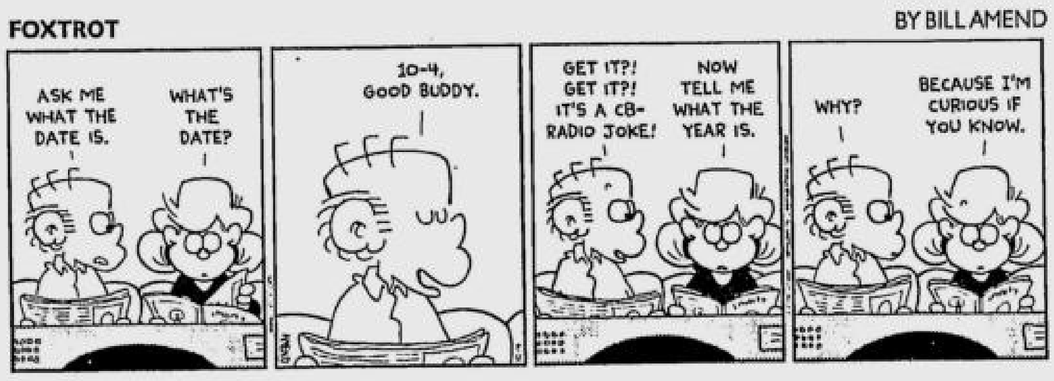
Coke Light best suits you. It's the same Coke but with less than 1 calorie, it's good for you.

Regulahhh
No sugahhh
Cherry wildahhh
Vanillahhh
Vanilla Coke
WITH VANILLA FLAVOR
NATURAL FLAVORS
330 mL
cherry Coke
SUGAR FREE
Coca-Cola light
330
Coca-Cola

"Coca-Cola" "Coca-Cola light" "Cherry Coke" "Vanilla Coke", and the Dynamic Ribbon device are trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company © 2004 The Coca-Cola Company

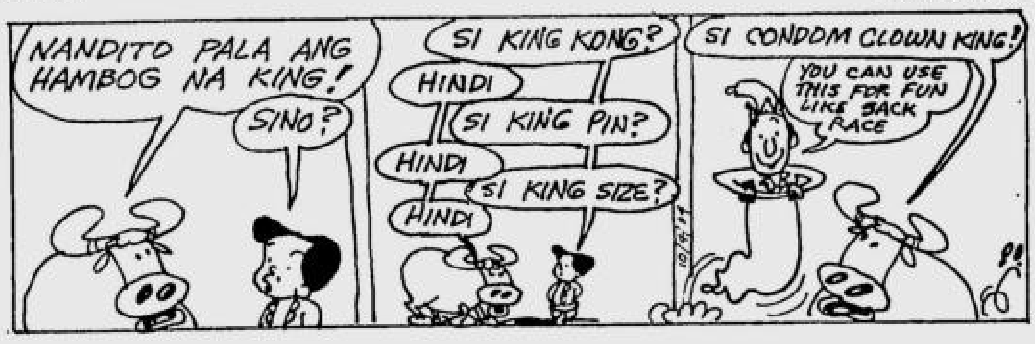
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


ASK ME WHAT THE DATE IS.
WHAT'S THE DATE?
10-4, GOOD BUDDY.
GET IT?! GET IT?! IT'S A CB-RADIO JOKE!
NOW TELL ME WHAT THE YEAR IS.
WHY?
BECAUSE I'M CURIOUS IF YOU KNOW.

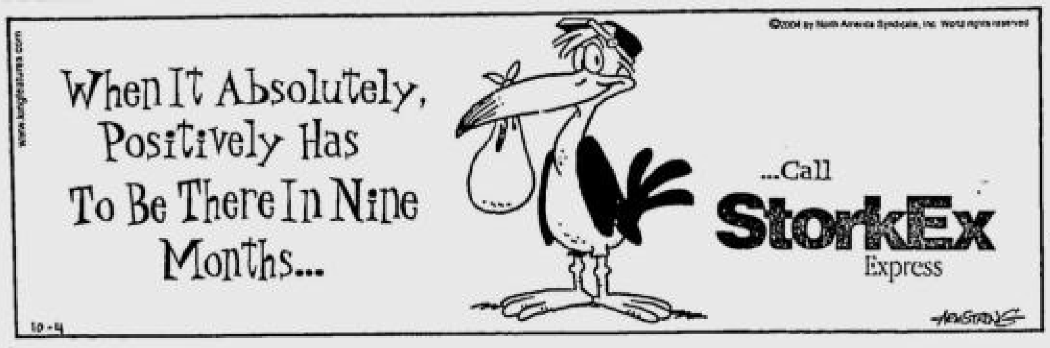
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NANDITO PALA ANG HAMBOG NA KING!
SINO?
SI KING KONG?
HINDI
SI KING PIN?
HINDI
SI KING SIZE?
HINDI
SI CONDOM CLOWN KING!
YOU CAN USE THIS FOR FUN LIKE SACK RACE

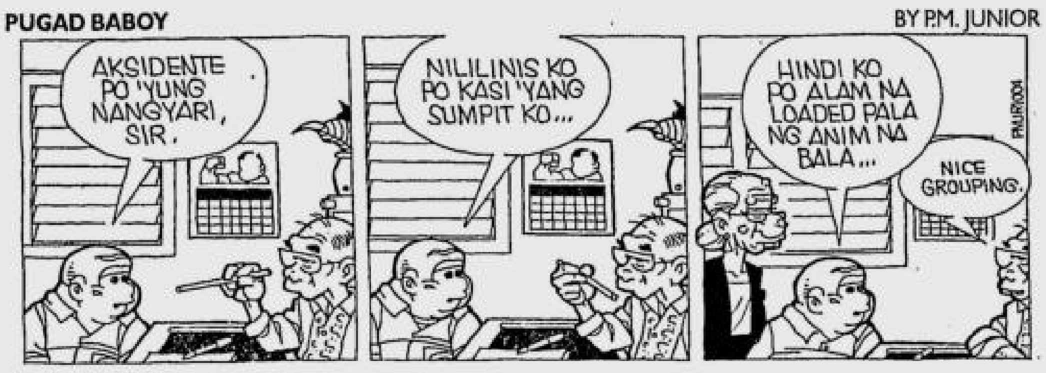
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


When It Absolutely, Positively Has To Be There In Nine Months...
...Call
StorkEx
Express
10-4

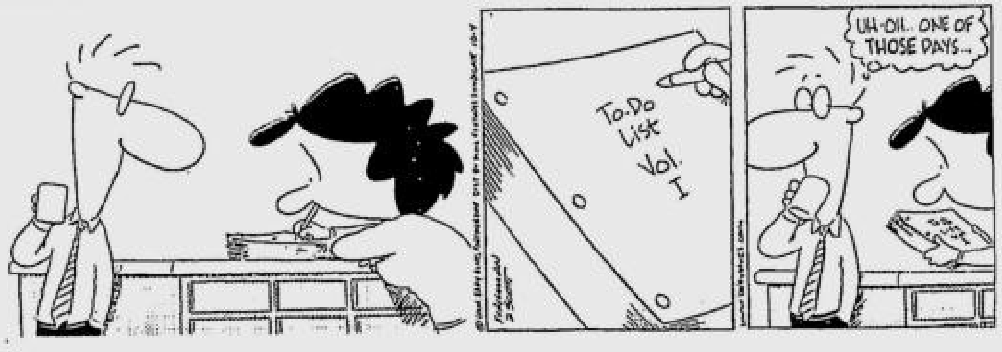
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AKSIDENTE PO 'YUNG NANGYARI, SIR.
NILILINIS KO PO KASI 'YANG SUMPIT KO...
HINDI KO PO ALAM NA LOADED PALA NG ANIM NA BALA...
NICE GROUPING.

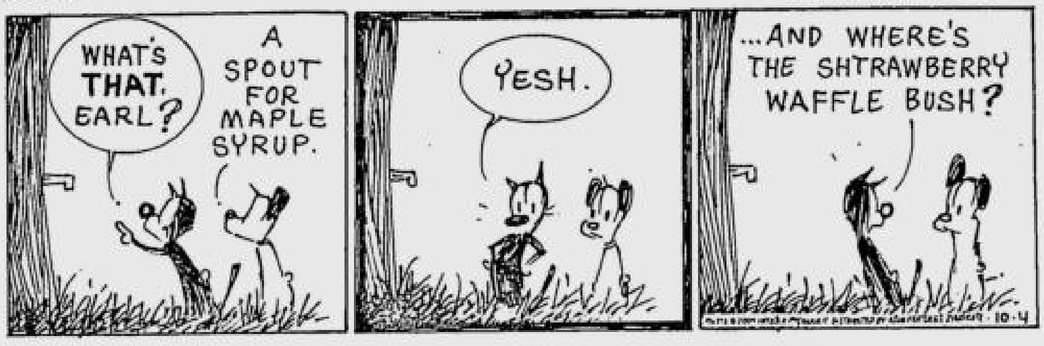
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


To Do List Vol. I
UH-OH.. ONE OF THOSE DAYS...

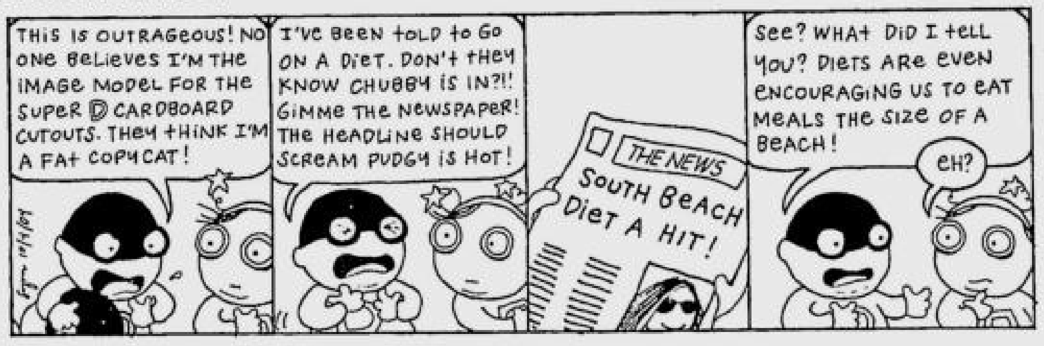
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT'S THAT, EARL?
A SPOUT FOR MAPLE SYRUP.
YESH.
...AND WHERE'S THE SHTRAWBERRY WAFFLE BUSH?
10-4

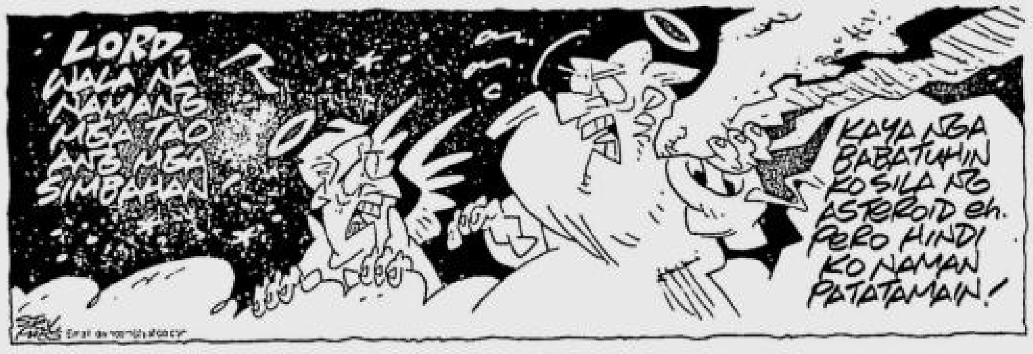
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! NO ONE BELIEVES I'M THE IMAGE MODEL FOR THE SUPER D CARDBOARD CUTOUTS. THEY THINK I'M A FAT COPYCAT!
I'VE BEEN TOLD TO GO ON A DIET. DON'T THEY KNOW CHUBBY IS IN?!! GIMME THE NEWSPAPER! THE HEADLINE SHOULD SCREAM PUDGY IS HOT!
THE NEWS
SOUTH BEACH DIET A HIT!
SEE? WHAT DID I TELL YOU? DIETS ARE EVEN ENCOURAGING US TO EAT MEALS THE SIZE OF A BEACH!
EH?

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LORD, WALA NA NAMANG TAO ANG MGA SIMBAHAN
KAYA NGA BABATUHIN KO SILA NG ASTEROID eh. PERO HINDI KO NAMAN PATATAMAIN!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a charming realist. There's far more to you than meets the eye. You have wonderful wit and humor. On the surface, you're smooth, social and pleasing. Privately, you're quite tough. You're certainly nobody's fool. Intense situations and people attract you. Focus on your closest partnerships and friendships this year.

Birthdate of: Buster Keaton, actor/director; Alicia Silverstone, actress; Susan Sarandon, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You want to help a friend now. Or perhaps you want to join a friend in helping others. Either way, you feel sympathetic to the needs of those who are less fortunate.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might use your influence at work or with people in authority to defend the rights of others now. You know that what is done to one is really done to all.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your imagination is fabulous right now! You have wonderful, outside-the-box ideas that should be shared with others. Speak up.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You want to help a family member today. You're even prepared to shoulder the lion's share of the burden. That's because you know someone needs a helping hand now.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel idealistic and romantic about your relationships today. Don't kid yourself about loved ones, however. Remember that they put on their pants one leg at a time, just like you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You might see new ways of earning money today. You can certainly see new ways of spending it (probably on something luxurious)! But you also might give to a charity or someone in need.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You need a little time to go off by yourself to think or meditate. Try to get a clearer picture of where you are in your life and where you want to be.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Solitude will be pleasing today. You need time to replenish, restore and reenergize yourself. You want as few distractions as possible.

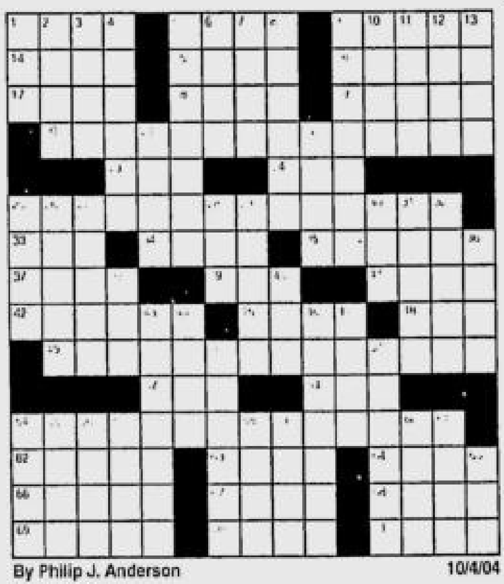
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Don't let your inner idealism convince you that your loved ones are anything more than ordinary humans. Yes, they're special, but so are you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Your boss or someone in authority might approach you to work on behalf of a needy group or a charitable organization. You won't regret giving this some of your time and effort.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): There are so many things in life you want to explore today! You want to learn more about the world. You want to know about other cultures and other people.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might be on the receiving end of some kind of generosity. Help from other sources comes easily to you today. (This is nice.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

10/4/04

ACROSS

1 New Zealander
5 Aardvark snack
9 Bovine lunch
14 Muscat's land
15 Weaver's device
16 Maui neighbor
17 Gasp
18 Cher's Sonny
19 Cancel, NASA-style
20 Think tank
23 Indian bread
24 In addition
25 Brains on the menu
33 River of Oral
34 Russian ruler
35 Attempters
37 Oven setting
39 Get hitched
41 Small combo
42 Asparagus shoots
45 Boxy vehicles
48 Printer's measures
49 Literati and illuminati
52 Actress Long
53 Hay storage
54 Sufficient?
62 Free-for-all
63 Boot tips
64 Stuff to the gills
66 Church officer
67 Madras wrap
68 Verifiable
69 Snow-day rides
70 Roush and Hall
71 Spanker or spinnaker

DOWN

1 Keystone karacter?
2 Muslim leader
3 Taper off
4 Have in mind
5 Those lacking pigmentation
6 High time?
7 Chinese secret society
8 Creamy
9 Fashion magazine
10 1944 physics Nobelist
11 In a short while
12 Orange-red chalcedony
13 Parks oneself
21 Roosevelt's successor
22 Section of a yard
25 Watch attachments
26 Giraffe relative
27 Like the old bucket of song
28 Untrained
29 Fountain of three coins
30 Beat it!
31 Toast's start
32 Singer Lopez
36 Wrigley Field slugger
38 Devour
40 Hammarskjold of the UN
43 Submits for approval
44 Cut open
46 Goddess of retribution
47 Winter weather
50 Founder of Taoism
51 Ironic endings
54 Iowa State city
55 Hale and hardy
56 Antique shop's affectation
57 Oboe or bassoon
58 Tailless amphibian
59 Reindeer bunch
60 Hall and Oates hit, "__ Smile"
61 Fancy case
65 Subsurface shocker

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

D	O	D	G	E	D	■	R	E	A	D	A	B	L	E
E	V	E	R	S	O	■	E	X	L	I	B	R	I	S
S	E	N	A	T	E	■	H	E	L	P	L	E	S	S
P	R	O	T	E	S	T	E	R	S	■	Y	A	L	E
E	T	U	I	S	■	H	A	T	E	D	■	K	E	N
R	U	N	S	■	P	I	T	S	T	O	P	■	■	■
A	R	C	■	D	E	N	S	■	■	T	A	M	P	S
D	E	E	P	E	N	S	■	S	T	E	R	I	L	E
O	S	S	I	F	■	■	D	E	F	[illegible]	■	T	E	E
■	■	■	P	R	I	C	E	D	I	■	W	E	A	R
H	A	[illegible]	■	S	T	O	L	I	■	P	A	S	S	E
O	L	A	F	■	C	H	A	R	L	O	T	T	E	S
R	I	C	O	C	H	E	T	■	O	R	S	O	N	S
D	E	R	R	I	E	R	E	■	A	T	O	N	C	E
E	N	A	M	O	R	E	D	■	D	O	N	E	E	S

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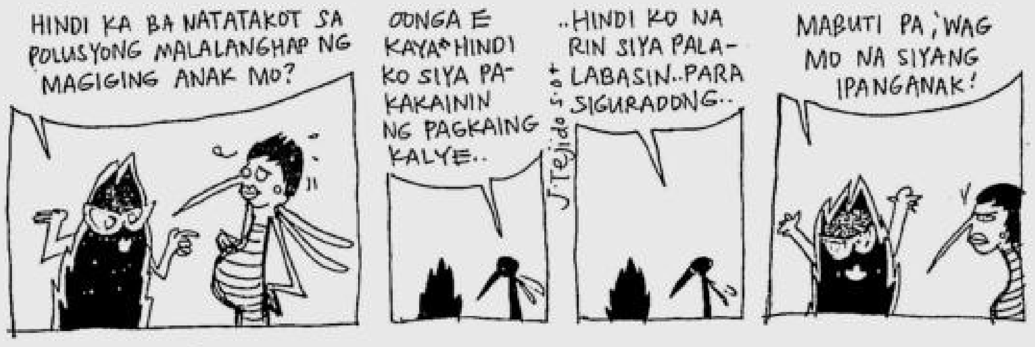
10/4/04

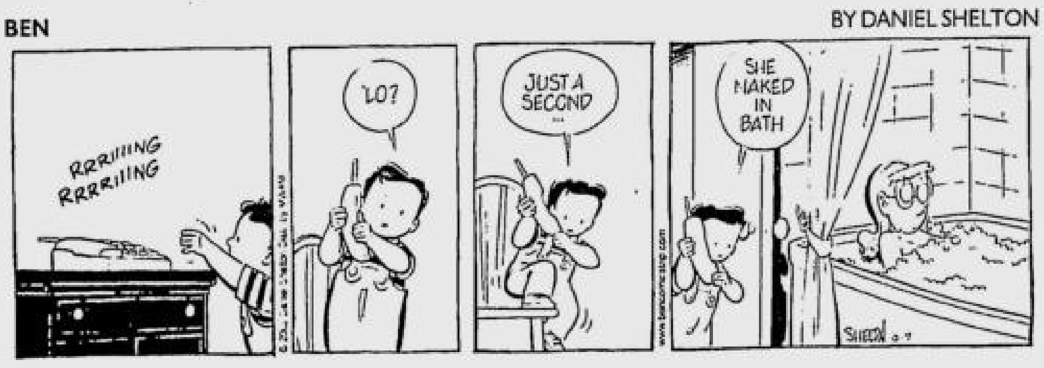
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HINDI KA BA NATATAKOT SA POLUSYONG MALALANGHAP NG MAGIGING ANAK MO?
OONGA E KAYA HINDI KO SIYA PAKAKAININ NG PAGKAING KALYE..
..HINDI KO NA RIN SIYA PALALABASIN..PARA SIGURADONG..
MABUTI PA, 'WAG MO NA SIYANG IPANGANAK!
J. Tejido

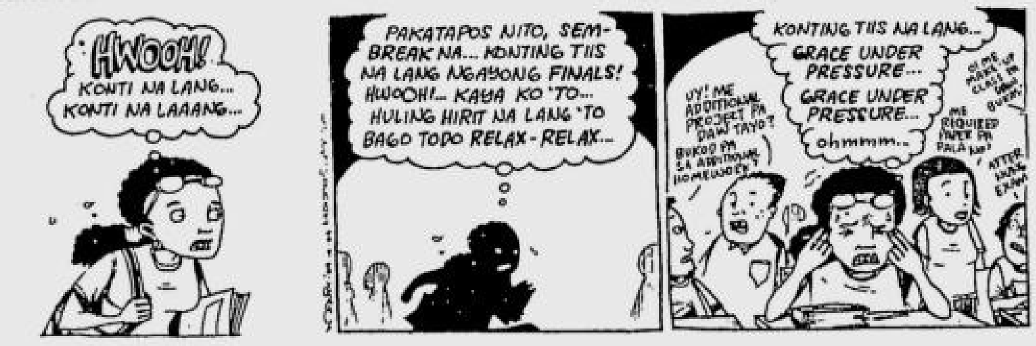
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


RRRIIIING RRRRIIING
'LO?
JUST A SECOND ...
SHE NAKED IN BATH
www.bencomicstrip.com

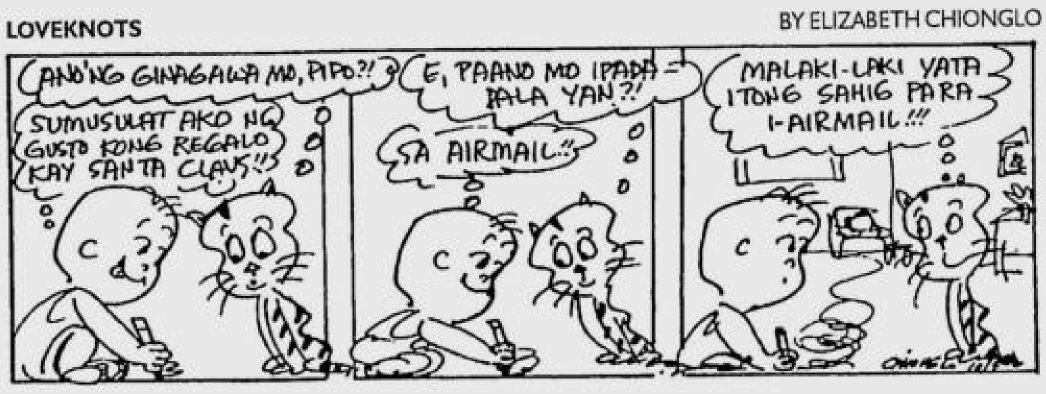
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH!
KONTI NA LANG... KONTI NA LAAANG...
PAKATAPOS NITO, SEMBREAK NA... KONTING TIIS NA LANG NGAYONG FINALS! HWOOH!... KAYA KO 'TO... HULING HIRIT NA LANG 'TO BAGO TODO RELAX-RELAX...
KONTING TIIS NA LANG... GRACE UNDER PRESSURE... GRACE UNDER PRESSURE... ohmmm...
UY! ME ADDITIONAL PROJECT PA DAW TAYO?
BUKOD PA SA ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK?
ME REQUIRED PAPER PA PALA NO?
AFTER NG EXAM?

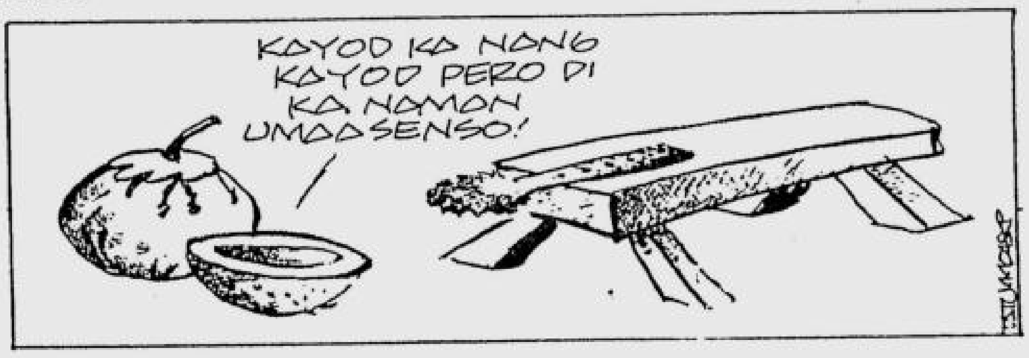
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANO'NG GINAGAWA MO, PIPO?!
SUMUSULAT AKO NG GUSTO KONG REGALO KAY SANTA CLAUS!!
E, PAANO MO IPADADALA YAN?!
SA AIRMAIL!!
MALAKI-LAKI YATA ITONG SAHIG PARA I-AIRMAIL!!!

TULDOK

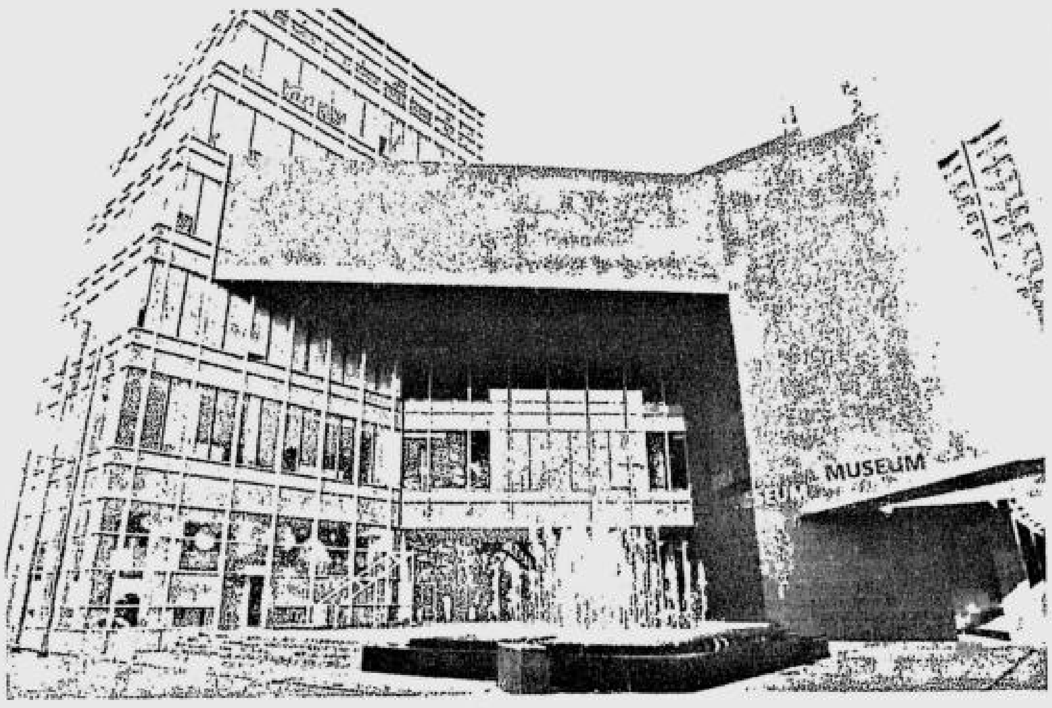
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KAYOD KA NANG KAYOD PERO DI KA NAMAN UMAASENSO!

Wonderful shell of heritage

By Ambeth R. Ocampo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo tours the new Ayala Museum with museum director Nina Baker, former President Corazon Aquino, Vice President Noli de Castro and Ayala Foundation chair Jaime Zobel de Ayala.



FAÇADE of the new Ayala Museum

MAKATI has changed so much and so fast in the last half-century that it is possible to date people by the Makati landmarks they remember: Rizal Theater, Bricktown, Makati Supermarket, Angela Arcade, Monterey Apartments, QUAD, etc. All these places are now extinct as dinosaurs, they remain but faint memories to people who now walk, work and shop around Greenbelt 1, 2, 3, 4; Glorietta 1 and 2; the Makati Shangri-La Hotel and 6750.

Some structures like the present Filipinas Heritage Library on Makati Avenue, between the old Makati Stock Exchange building and the Peninsula Hotel, was once the Nielsen Tower Restaurant, and earlier the Manila International and Air Terminal, an ancient airport whose runway is now Makati Avenue (or is it Paseo de Roxas?). What buildings you remember about Makati reveals your age.

When the old Ayala Museum was demolished two years ago some rabid heritage conservationists complained that the commercialization of Makati had a numbing effect on people leading to a lack of concern over the squat, dated concrete box designed by the late National Artist for Architecture Leandro V. Locsin. In its place now stands an imposing six-story structure of granite, glass and steel, designed by Leandro Y. Locsin Jr.—a new Ayala Museum bigger and better than the old one, In time the Ayala Museum will drop the adjective new and the old structure will again be a memory.

What most people remember about the old Ayala Museum is a long and dark tunnel containing 63 handcrafted dioramas that provide a static but three-dimensional capsule history of the Philippines. These dioramas are still around, on the second floor of the museum, spruced up and arranged with other materials like a collection of boat models and even wall charts that make visitors measure themselves, physically at least, with Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio and Manuel Luis Quezon. It is better lighted and a delight to visit. While the dioramas do not extend to 2004, the end of the tour are three rooms with a multimedia presentation that remind us of: Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, Martial Law, Benigno and Cory Aquino and of course, People Power 1986. It is a tunnel of memory and yet few will remember beyond the present building or the original Locsin building inaugurated in 1974 to even imagine the beginnings of the museum in the Insular Life building in the 1960s.

Bigger space

With a bigger space equipped with state-of-the-art galleries, the present museum is a wonderful shell designed to house not only the museum's modest collection of pre-colonial and colonial artifacts, paintings by Juan Luna, Fernando Amorsolo and Fernando Zobel, maps, prints, but as exhibition space for important exhibitions. The inaugural shows on the fourth floor give us a view of life in the past through an exhibit of ivory images made in the Philippines (some early ones by Chinese artisans) from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

While most of the great pieces were exported to Spain, Mexico, and other countries, the images gathered from local collections is a good sign that not all our cultural treasures are abroad. Titled "Power+Faith+Image," this exhibition, curated by Ramon Villegas and Regalado Trota Jose, comes with a handsome catalogue that is, for the moment, the last word on ivory items once thought to be Spanish or Mexican but are now listed in international auction catalogues, rightly as "Hispano-Philippine Ivories."

"Multiple Originals, Original Multiples" is another exhibit that brings together for the first time the watercolor albums of Philippine costumes by Damian Domingo: one from the Ayala Museum collection, the other from the Newberry Library in Chicago.

Another album of watercolors depicting different types of 19th-century Filipinos and their costumes was brought in from the New York Public Library and was put side by side with a set of similar plates, actually engravings hand-colored by the 19th-century Filipino master Justiniano Asuncion.

Bought by tourists as souvenirs these two albums from Chicago and New York have never been loaned outside the US and they are both here on a homecoming visit and afford us not only a glimpse of life in the past, but provide some comparison and contrast with similar artifacts in the Philippines.

Notable in this exhibition are actual pieces of clothing from the Leiden Museum of Ethnology in the Netherlands that validate those documented in the Domingo and Asuncion albums. During the opening night some guests actually came in custom-made Filipiniana attire based on these albums.

These costumes have been kept in storage for over a century and most are being exhibited publicly for the first time. While lighting and climate controls preserve these costumes during their Philippine visit, conservation requires that upon their return to the Netherlands these costumes will be laid to rest and not be exhibited again for the next seven years.

Now open to the public and dedicated to the Filipino People by the Ayala Foundation, the Ayala Museum starts anew on its aim not only to collect and recollect the past but to allow our history and culture to become a source of pride for Filipinos as they confront an uncertain future.

> The Ayala Museum starts anew on its aim to allow our history and culture to become a source of pride for Filipinos

Conference on national and local history in Cavite

THE PHILIPPINE National Historical Society, founded in 1941 and the oldest historical society in the Philippines, will hold its 25th National Conference on National and Local History on Oct. 21-23 at Cavite State University in Indang, Cavite.

Former Prime Minister Cesar E. A. Virata, president of the Cavite Historical Society, will deliver the keynote address on "Cavite's Economic Transformations Over the Years."

Since its first National Conference on Local and National History in 1978 at Xavier University, the PNHS has held annual conferences on local and national histories in various locations in the country.

The conference theme this year is "Focus on Cavite Studies: Local History in the Context of National History," with papers to be presented on a variety of topics covering the history and culture not just of Cavite but also of areas beyond the province such as Visayas and Mindanao, and even the Marianas.

Among these topics are the region's culinary and church history, Caviteno writers, Chabacano poems, the PC Band, folk songs, anting-anting and religious folklore, population history, everyday life during the Revolution, the archaeology of Cavite Puerto, institutional history, documentary sources on religious history in Cavite, and Cavite historiography.

The speakers include the following: Ruperto S. Sangalang and A.G. Papa (Cavite State University), Emmanuel Luis A. Romanillos (UP Diliman), Felice Prudente Sta. Maria, Antonio C. Hila (DlSU-Manila), Rosalinda G. Garibay and Edgar B. Tibayan (DLS-Dasmariñas), Jeffrey A. Lubang (National Historical Institute), Regalado Trotas Jose, Jr. (University of Santo Tomas), Jose Alain J. Austria (DLSU-Saint Benilde), Augusto de Viana (National Historical Institute), Efren R. Abueg (DLS-Dasmariñas),Emmanuel F. Calairo (DLS-Dasmariñas), Elmer A. Ordoñez (UP Diliman), Earl Jude Paul Cleope (Silliman), Rene R. Escalante (DLSU-Manila), Ronaldo B. Mactal (DLSU Manila), Francis A. Gealogo (Ateneo de Manila),Daniel C. Talde (UP Tacloban), Rolando O. Borrinaga (UP Manila, Palo, Leyte), Calbi Asain (MSU-Sulu), Philip Nazareno, Maria Eloisa P. de Castro (University of Santo Tomas), and Bernardita R. Churchill.

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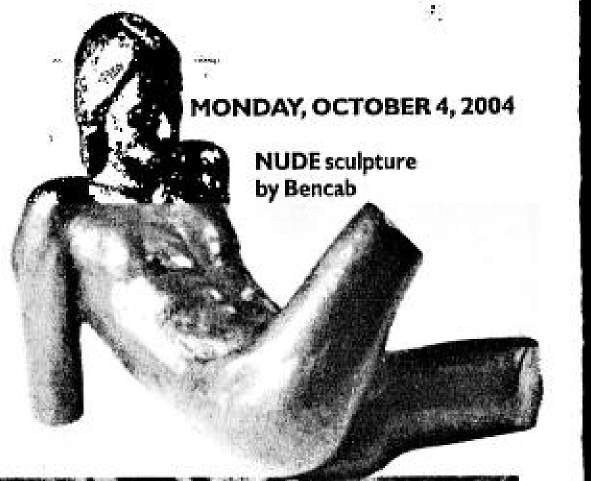
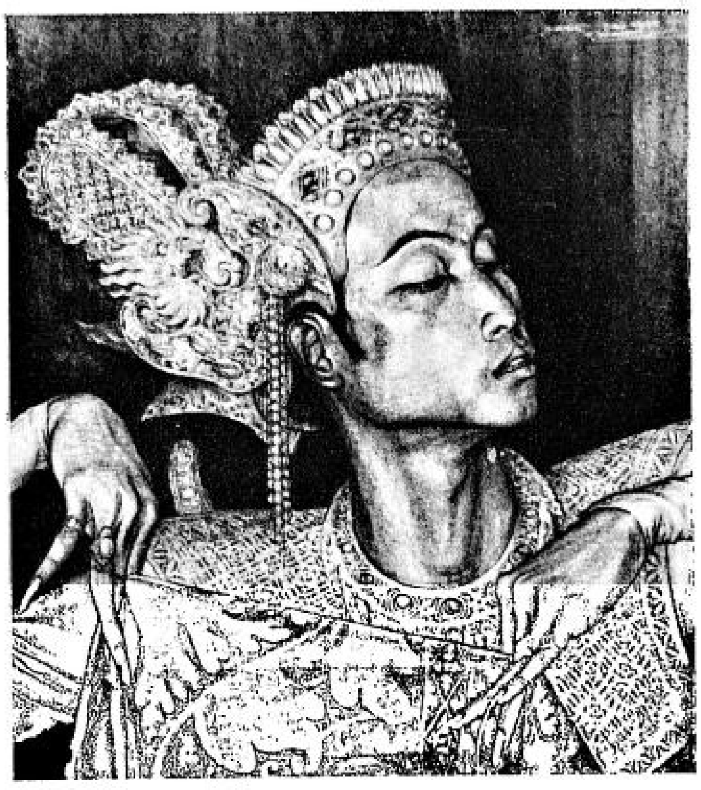
New auction of Philippine art


NUDE sculpture by Bencab


RUDOLF Bonnet painting

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

ONCE again, premier Philippine artists shall figure in the Christie's auction of Southeast Asian art. The works shall be exhibited at Grand Hyatt Singapore on Oct. 8 and 9 as a preview to the bidding.

Anita Magsaysay-Ho's "A Walk in the Rain" is rare. She is largely known for her women with Sino eyes, but the work to be auctioned does not show facial features. Just the same, it exudes the oriental air so characteristic of her paintings. The *salakot* and the straw poncho may very well be Vietnamese yet the scene is common in many Philippine barrios.

It has also the understated melding of the native and modernity, signified by the blurry umbrella-toting figures in the background. The boy is barefoot while in contrast, those covered by the umbrella seem shod and are in non-traditional garb. The rain serves as a perfect foil to the tropical scene.

A calming rendition in pinks, lavenders, and purple is Nena Saguil's abstraction. The work parlays the artist's consistent photism. From her signature circulars radiate petal-like haloes. These result in what may be called balmy pulsations, much like a mirage, as if she had transferred onto canvas a hallucinatory vision, if not a sensation, of light.

"Mango Vendors" is vintage Fernando Amorsolo, his women taking shade beneath a mango tree, sunlight dappling the ground through gaps of the greenery branches.

It is not, however, *el amor solo* who shall fetch the highest possible bid in this batch. In the running for highest bidding is a Vicente Manansala watercolor, the 1968 "Crucifixion," which is estimated at six figures in American currency.

The work is an amalgam of the artist's character and his art-making. It encapsulates how he lived in and with faith, and the profound effect faith had on his art.

The scene may be of two devout women venerating a *santo*, or of Mary, the wife of Cleophas or Clopas, and Mary Magdalene at the foot the crucified Jesus (instead of the Virgin Mary and John the Beloved). Whichever. Manansala's cubism is apt in the final stage of the Christ's passion.

The reclining nude sculpture of Bencab may be considered the modern-day David. The figure, seemingly male, is androgynous, with long hair and a lithe figure, slight even. Maybe reminiscent of a waif-like Twiggy physique.

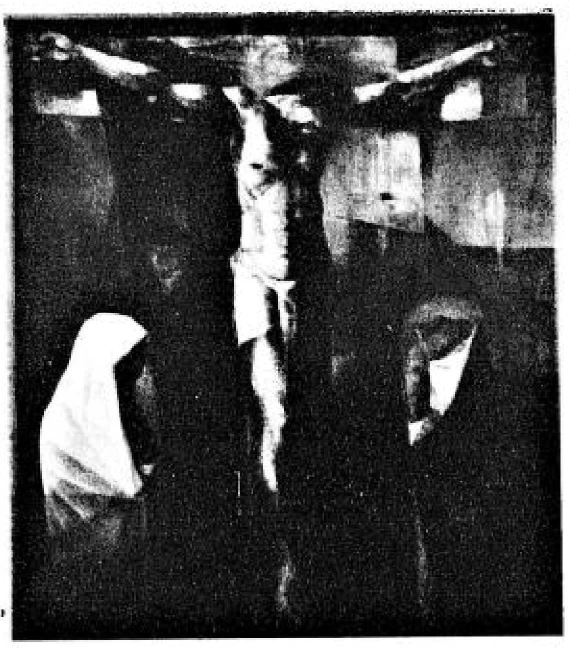
The features are not necessarily patrician, but then today's male mannequins do not necessarily fall under the "handsome" category. The fusion of the the classical and the contemporary is fitting in this age of the metrosexual.

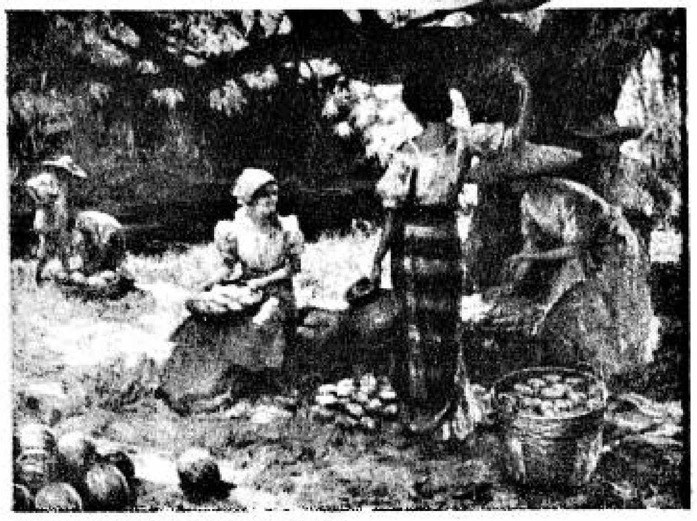
Other Southeast Asian works in the auction include those by Indonesians Hendra Gunawan and Affandi, and Singaporean Georgette Chen. Also featured are the Southeast Asian-themed works of Rudolf Bonnet of the Netherlands, and Belgian Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merpres

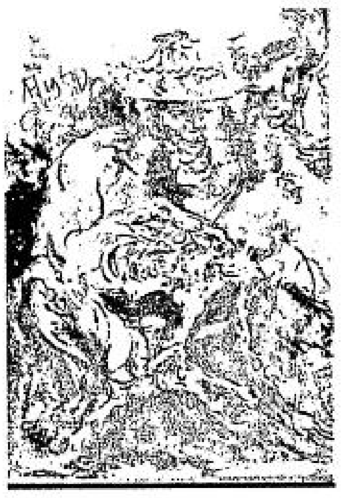
It has been noted Philippine art is different from those of the other countries in the region in that hardly any foreigner has penetrated its market. Filipino artists continue to rule the local scene.

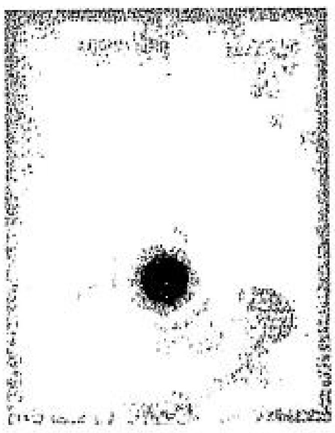
That homegrown Filipino art is at par with the rest of Southeast Asia and the world is shown in auctions such as Christie's. Indeed, the fierce biddings for Philippine art in these international tradings should show it can hold its own against the best art of other nations.

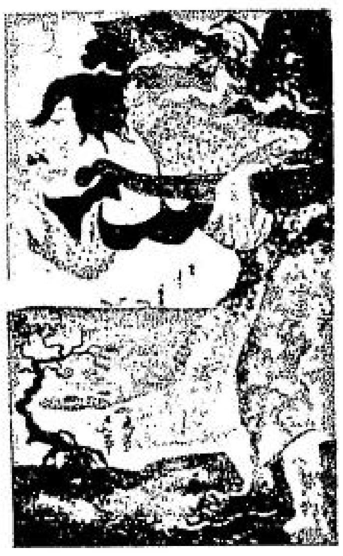
Email author at jejaro2002@yahoo.com

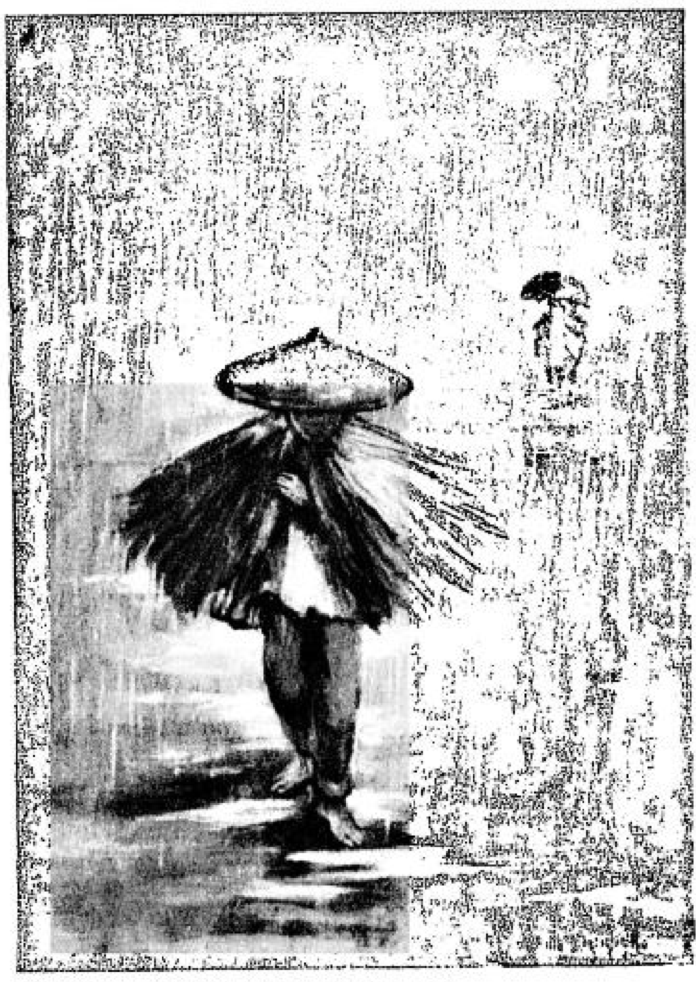

VICENTE Manansala's "Crucifixion"


AMORSOLO'S "Mango Vendors"


WORK by the Indonesian Affandi


ABSTRACT by Nena Saguil


ARTWORK by Gunawan


ANITA Magsaysay-Ho's "A Walk in the Rain"

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Classics
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DUNKIN' DONUTS

Racing event to benefit artists and cultural workers

ON OCT. 9, the Asian Cultural Council Philippines Foundation will sponsor a special racing event at the Manila Jockey Club, San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite, to raise funds for grants to deserving Filipino artists.

Many established cultural icons have at one time or another been recipients of Asian Cultural Council grants, such as Lucrecia Kasilag and Jose Maceda, Jose Joya, Nestor Jardin, Tikoy Aguiluz, Ramon, Denisa Reyes and Gino Gonzales.

The Cup is organized by Ambassadors Isabel Caro Wilson and Narcisa Escaler, chair and president of the council.

The first Filipino Artists Cup event will feature a video documentary, depicting the role of past national and influential Filipino artists and their present-day counterparts who continue to enrich the Filipino soul.

BATTLE of the sexes in "Oleanna" /D2

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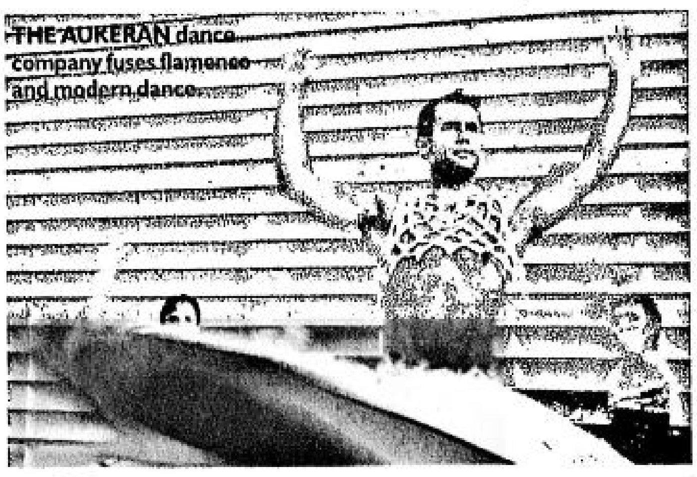
THE AUKERAN dance company fuses flamenco and modern dance.

See you at the 'Fiesta!'

By Leah C. Salterio
Contributor

A PUPPET presentation of "Don Quixote," a photo exhibit of architectural wonders by Gaudi, music, poetry, dance, culinary treats and a festival of critically acclaimed and award-winning Spanish films are in the calendar of "Fiesta," the month-long Spanish festival for culture and the arts.

Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish Cultural Center, has lined up the activities for the annual event, which kicked off last Friday with the grand launch party at the Greenbelt 3 fountain area, organized with Ayala Land.

"Fiesta 2004" boasts of a more lavish celebration, with a variety of cultural events, live performances and Spanish performing artists who will be flown in to Manila for special shows.

Last Saturday, the legendary Spanish puppet troupe, Bambalina, delighted audiences with its multi-awarded presentation of Miguel de Cervantes' classic "Don Quixote," at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium of the RCBC Plaza in Makati City.

Bambalina has earned numerous awards in Europe and Latin America for "Don Quixote," which has been described as a production that is "both intimate and vital, imaginatively

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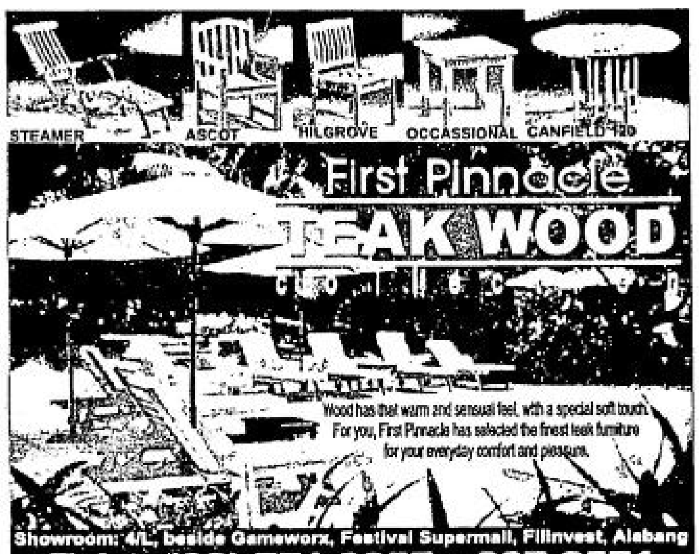

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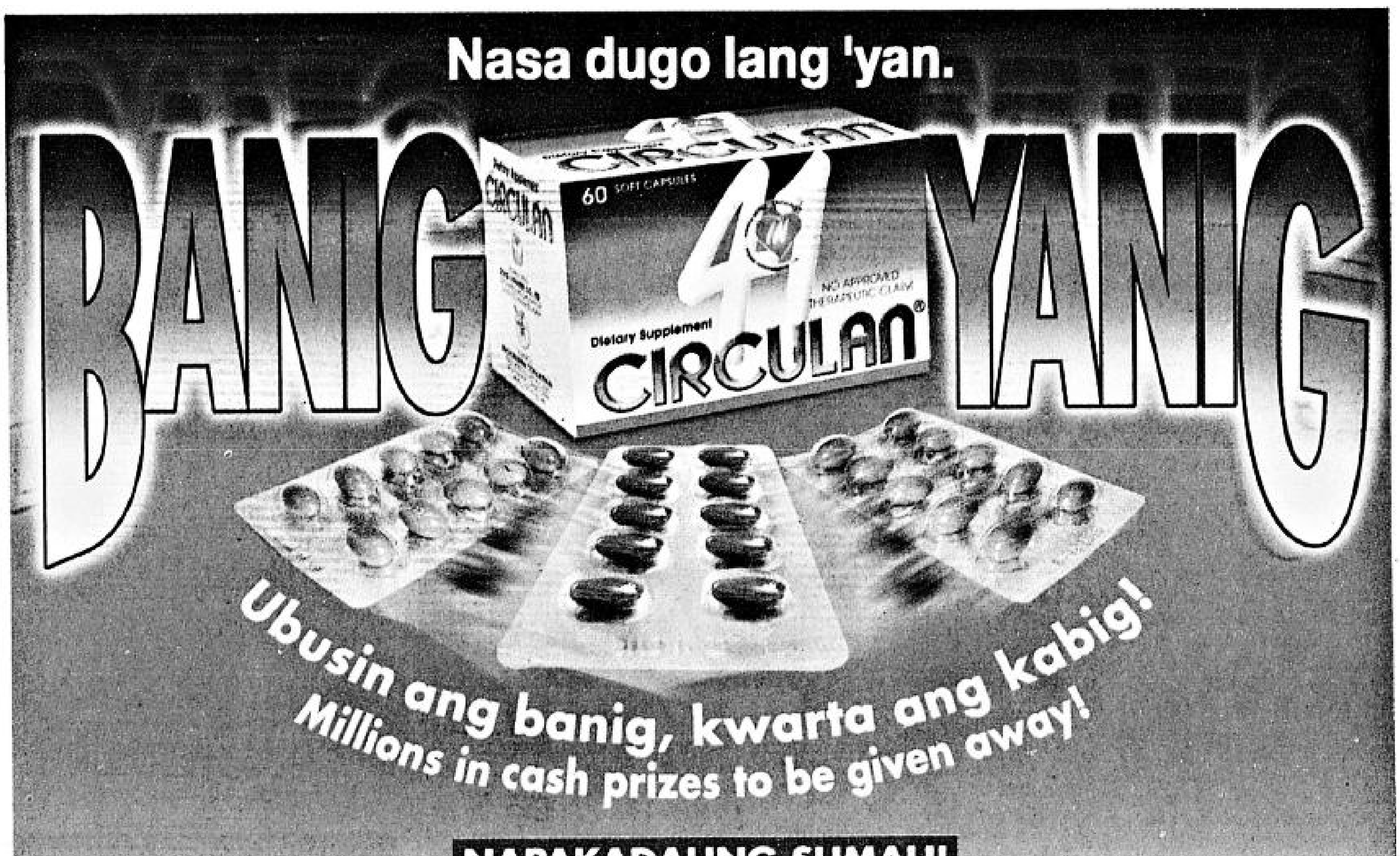

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Baby of a thousand ovations

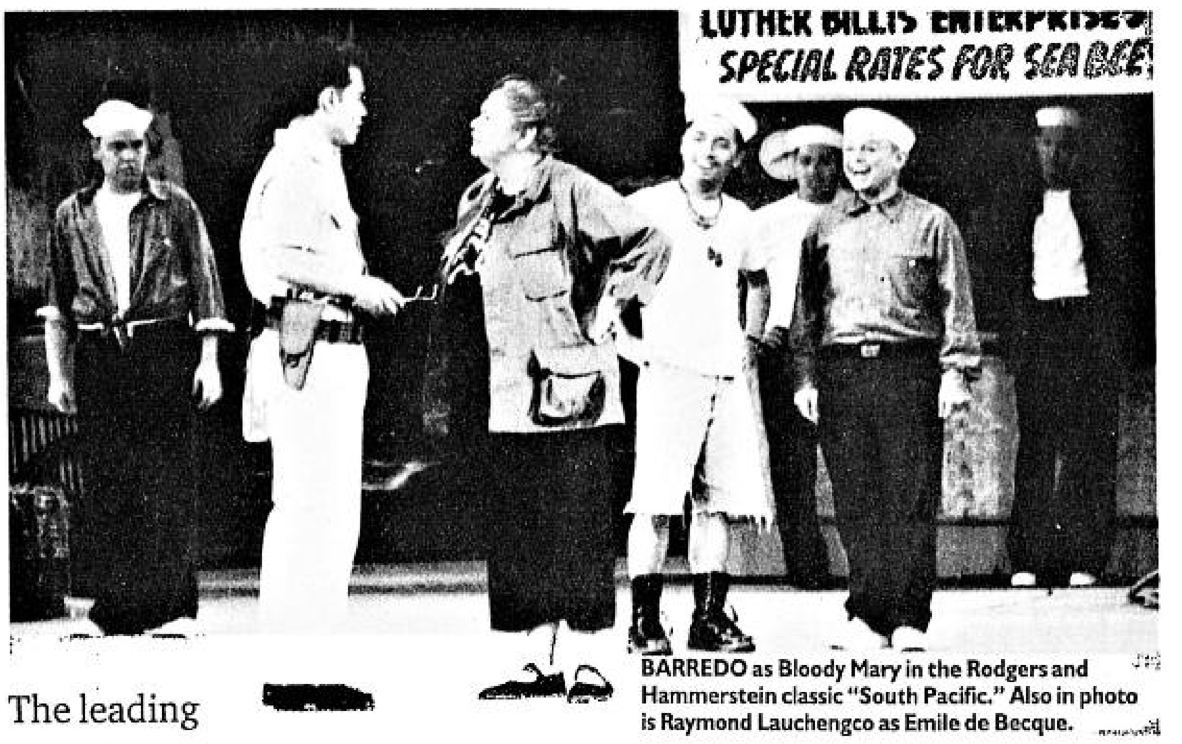
By Zeneida Amador
Contributor

WATCHED Baby Barredo for the final casting of the musical she's directing, the MGM version of "The Wizard of Oz."

Meticulous as ever, she paid attention to every nuance of note and lyric for the musical interpretation, insisted on the actors picking at the text and subtext for meaning, and conferred lengthily with choreographer Jaime del Prado for what she wanted for the dancing.

It was a long, laborious evening, but she got what she wanted.

BABY Barredo as the legendary opera star Maria Callas in the award-winning play "Master Class"



BARREDO as Bloody Mary in the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic "South Pacific." Also in photo is Raymond Lauchengco as Emile de Becque.

Baby has such an eye for even the smallest detail that nothing escapes her eye and nothing escapes her ear's perfect pitch. Truly the directors' director.

Toast of local theater

Perhaps one reason Baby is such a good director is that she is an excellent intuitive actress. And she honed those instincts with formal study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. Not to mention her M.A. in music in Bloomington, Indiana, (famous for its music school) and special studies in Juilliard.

Her latest stints on stage were "The Cherry Orchard," "South Pacific," "Oliver," "Over The River and Through The Woods," "Master Class" and "Late Nite Catechism." Before that, of course, she was the toast of local musical theater in "Mame," "The Sound of Music," "Hello, Dolly," "My Fair Lady" and as Dulcinea in "Man of La Mancha."

She also had a TV show called "Baby is My Name," which featured excerpts from musicals and plays. In short, Baby did not come to the director's seat unprepared.

She stopped singing when she thought it was time to, and only took straight plays when she was needed at the Rep, like the good trouper that she is.

Years ago, we had sold "The Owl and The Pussycat," a two-hander with Nestor Torre, for a one-night extension show at the UP but she had a high fever which her old family doctor later on confirmed was H-Fever.

She gamely went on, changing her blocking now and then, with Nestor adapting easily and nobody in the audience any wiser. They got a standing ovation at the end of the show. It was straight to the hospital after that for Baby.

Then, during a performance of "The Sound of Music," she sprained her ankle badly before getting into the car to go to CCP. Her ankle was swollen so badly, she couldn't put on her shoes. Irma Ponce Enrile-Potenciano's husband, Dr. Potenciano, was backstage, so he gave her a shot and told her to try not to put too much weight on the injured ankle.

> The leading lady of Philippine theater is an excellent intuitive actress and a true directors' director

Well, she had to sing and dance, so she went ahead and did what she had to do. When the painkiller wore off, it was mercifully toward the end of the show, and she fainted right after curtain call. But she did finish the show.

Pioneering days

There are so many other instances where, with back pain or flu, she just went on because, as she put it, "you can't disappoint that audience out there."

Now, actors and actresses are more comfortable, with better pay, rehearsal fees and understudies or alternates or swings.

But we were pioneering in theater then, and life is always harder for those who cut the path. The upside is, the discipline is strong, the commitment unswerving, and the cause always believed worthwhile. All this, Baby continues to bring to the theater.

As I watched Baby working long into the audition night, without getting tired, impatient or giving up on anything right to the very end, I wondered why people do the things they do. More specifically, why artists spend so much time on their art when the pay is not at all commensurate (at least in this country) nor the work trifling and easy.

Sometimes it seems so unfair that some can focus and commit so much and give their all, while crooks and grafters get away with murder and get rich in the bargain.

But I shouldn't wonder why. Baby simply dismisses these puzzlements with "I sleep very well at night."

Campus face-off

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

THE YEAR would likely be characterized as "The Year of the Woman" as far as the Metro Manila theater scene is concerned.

Tami Monsod's fiercely liberal nun questioned a patriarchal Church in New Voice Company's "Sacrilege"; and Tanghalang Pilipino's "Trojan Women," led by Madeleine Nicolas' bloody but unbowed Hecuba, railed against the horrors of a war that is launched, fought, and won by men.

Now it's the turn of Actor's Actors Inc. (AAI) in its one-weekend run of David Mamet's highly acclaimed "Oleanna." This time, the battle is fought inside the stiff, proper confines of the academe, and as in the previous two plays, it is delineated by gender.

A feisty lady student cries sexual harassment at the abuses—which may be more verbal and emotional, than physical—of his arrogant, know-it-all professor.

LARA Fabregas and Bart Guingona in David Mamet's "Oleanna"

Turning the tables

On a two-month vacation from her studies and the beginning attempts to carve a stage career in London, Lara Fabregas essays the role of Carol, the once mousey prey who turns the table and becomes the predator.

"She doesn't come from a wealthy family, and it took her a lot to get to that school. She's also very angry, very politically correct, and has no imagination," says Fabregas of her onstage character.

The verbal fracas starts when Carol begs professor John not to fail her—and he answers her with sophisticated, ivory-tower-sounding but empty phrases that frustrate her no end.

"John likes to talk a lot and throw out all his theories. When he starts presenting that higher education is totally a waste of time, Carol [lashes back,] 'How can you say that when I worked hard to get here, and you, a teacher, say it's all a joke?'"

Expect a lot of the intellectual debate and unnerving intensity that usually accompany an AAI play. Director Bart Guingona, who also plays John, debunks the initial publicity hints of a latent sexual tension between these strong characters in a love-hate relationship.

"Theirs is purely hate-hate. [The material is] unrelenting, makes no compromises, and is gripping but not vicious—until you get to the point where it almost becomes hand-to-hand combat. It will anger and polarize you, and make you and your date argue with each other," he says.

As the argument escalates and raises the stakes, both characters realize they have a lot to lose: John risks his tenure and his academic reputation, while Carol faces expulsion.

Guingona says, "It's about the whole university con game where the currency is power, and everyone is wrestling and trading for it."

Rejuvenation of sorts

The dramatic tension that the play brings to the characters, audience, and actors alike is a rejuvenation of sorts for Fabregas. The actress, who has played saints (Joan of Arc) and conflicted sinners alike ("Closer," "Shopping and Fucking"), remains candid about a Filipina actress' gaining entry into London theater, especially non-musical drama.

"You're typecast in a way when they look for an Asian woman. You feel stupid doing some of these things—like playing Thai masseur in a parlor—but you do it. But it's not just Asian casting. I've auditioned for Mediterranean and American parts in dramas and feature films. Once, I tested for the leading lady of a Jude Law film but they cast someone with a name—that usually happens."

During auditions, "I used to get so nervous because I might be rejected. Now if I'm rejected, it doesn't affect me anymore. You keep pushing because at the end of the day, you never know," says Fabregas.

She can also laugh good-naturedly at some of the more outrageous moments she's encountered. "The wackiest audition was for a French film and the script is French. My character is American who speaks French, so I was told that it was okay if my accent was not perfect. But I couldn't understand what I was saying! So I just read it and [told myself] *'Bahala na!'* You can get thick-skinned."

Then there were the first 10 months when she tried waiting on tables. "I romanticized it in the beginning, that I was an actress, and actresses work on the side as waitresses. But it was brainless. After a few months, I was saying, 'Get me out of here! I can't stand this!'"

For intellectual exercise, and possibly a career option, Fabregas is taking Life Sciences via distance learning at Open University. Her studies give her room and time for auditions, as tutoring is done online and the various subjects can be taken at one's pace.

While the actress remains mum about her break-up with Raymond Bagatsing, she is more open about her new love whose privacy she prefers to respect. "I am seeing somebody," she confirms, a bit of a glow lighting up her face. "He's a British banker. We've been together for a year. He's fun and adventurous. We enjoy the same things like mountain biking, good food and walking. He is very supportive. I was just about to be here [in Manila] on holiday for two weeks, but he suggested that I stay longer [and act] because he knew I was so frustrated in London."

Delays and occasional hurdles notwithstanding, Fabregas remains on track, with an eye toward the bright side. "I'm independent. I manage to pay the rent [though] London is more expensive than Paris."

The light glow subtly shifts into an intense flame, shades of the rising courage that theater-goers will see in her character this weekend. Fabregas' last words might well be the combative Carol's: "There is still something to work for. I haven't achieved yet what I set out to achieve."

AAI's "Oleanna" runs at Stageworx, 5/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall on Oct. 8-9. Call 5365844.

'Florante at Laura' as a 'komedya'

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), together with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), is presenting Francisco Balagtas' "Florante at Laura," staged in the form of the Filipino *komedya*, beginning Oct. 15 at St. Scholastica's College, Manila.

This *awit* by Balagtas, believed to be written by the poet during his prison term, is an enduring metrical Filipino romance that embodies humility, courtesy and love told in 399 twelve-syllable Tagalog quatrains.

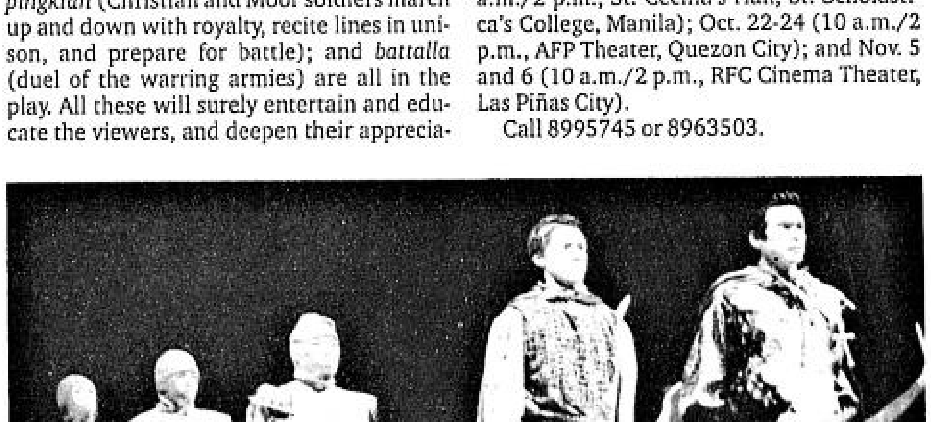
As GTF president and artistic director Tony Espejo explains, "We are giving this delightful epic poem an artistic facelift as we use an authentic Filipino theater form—the *komedya*. Elements of the *komedya* such as the *marcha* (slow tempo entrances); *paso doble* (livelier and faster-paced entrances); *pingkian* (Christian and Moor soldiers march up and down with royalty, recite lines in unison, and prepare for battle); and *battalla* (duel of the warring armies) are all in the play. All these will surely entertain and educate the viewers, and deepen their appreciation and understanding of this Filipino dramatic structure."

Cast are the GTF Actors Company led by Arkin da Silva (Florante), Adriana Agcaoili (Laura); Wowie de Guzman and Richard Signey (alternately playing Adolfo); Dido de la Paz (Haring Linceo); Bodiie Pascua (Duke Briseo); Yutaka Yamakawa Jr. (Menandro); Jay-R Inocencio and Michael King Urieta (alternately playing Batang Florante/narrator); Joel Molina (Aladin) and Paula Ferrer and Mikki Hernandez (alternately playing Flerida).

Scriptwriter/artistic consultant is Rodante Hernandez, lights designer is Joey Nombres, set designer is Sonny Aniceto and choreographer is John Dekster Santos.

Performances are on Oct. 15-17 (10 a.m./2 p.m., St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, Manila); Oct. 22-24 (10 a.m./2 p.m., AFP Theater, Quezon City); and Nov. 5 and 6 (10 a.m./2 p.m., RFC Cinema Theater, Las Piñas City).

Call 8995745 or 8963503.



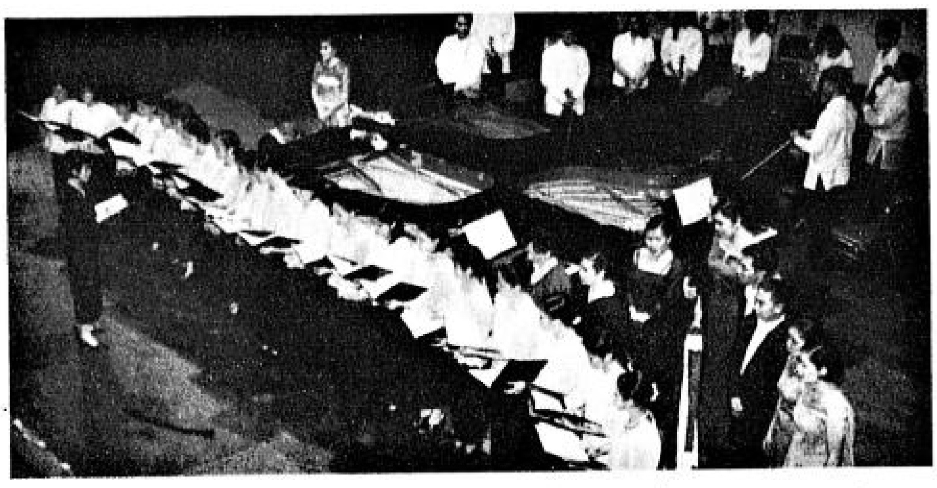
YUTAKA Yamakawa Jr. (Menandro) and Arkin Da Silva (Florante)

Seminar on financial fitness

THE COLAYCO Foundation for Education, Inc. headed by Francisco J. Colayco, author of the best-selling book "Wealth Within Your Reach (Pera Mo Palaguin Mo)," will conduct a five-hour seminar on financial matters together with other financial experts on Oct. 15 and Nov. 13 at the Conference Room of SM Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Colayco has been presenting a series of "Kalayaan sa Kakapusan" seminars in Hong Kong for the OFW sector. His mission is to educate the working class, OFWs and their families and students that financial independence is within everyone's reach.

Call 4350265, 4350556, 4350185 or text KSK 0917-8537333. E-mail colaycofoundation@yahoo.com or visit www.cfeksk.com



St. Scholastica holds chamber music

ST. SCHOLASTICA'S College School of Music will hold the second concert of the Chamber Music Series for school year 2004-2005 titled "Folk Songs Around the World," on Oct. 5 at 12 p.m.

The show will feature faculty members and advanced students, and will showcase the different groups in the department, such as the Piano ensemble, Guitar quartet and the SSC Chamber Orchestra.

The concert will be held at the St. Cecilia's Hall. Admission is free.

Claudine Barretto's daughter graces cover of show-biz glossy

BRUSHING off persistent rumors that she's on the family way, Claudine Barretto graces the cover of this month's StarStudio Magazine as a—surprise!—new mom.

The actress, together with fiancé Raymart Santiago, has adopted a baby that she literally found on her doorstep last July. The child's name is Sabina Natasha, who, at the time of the cover shoot, was three months old.

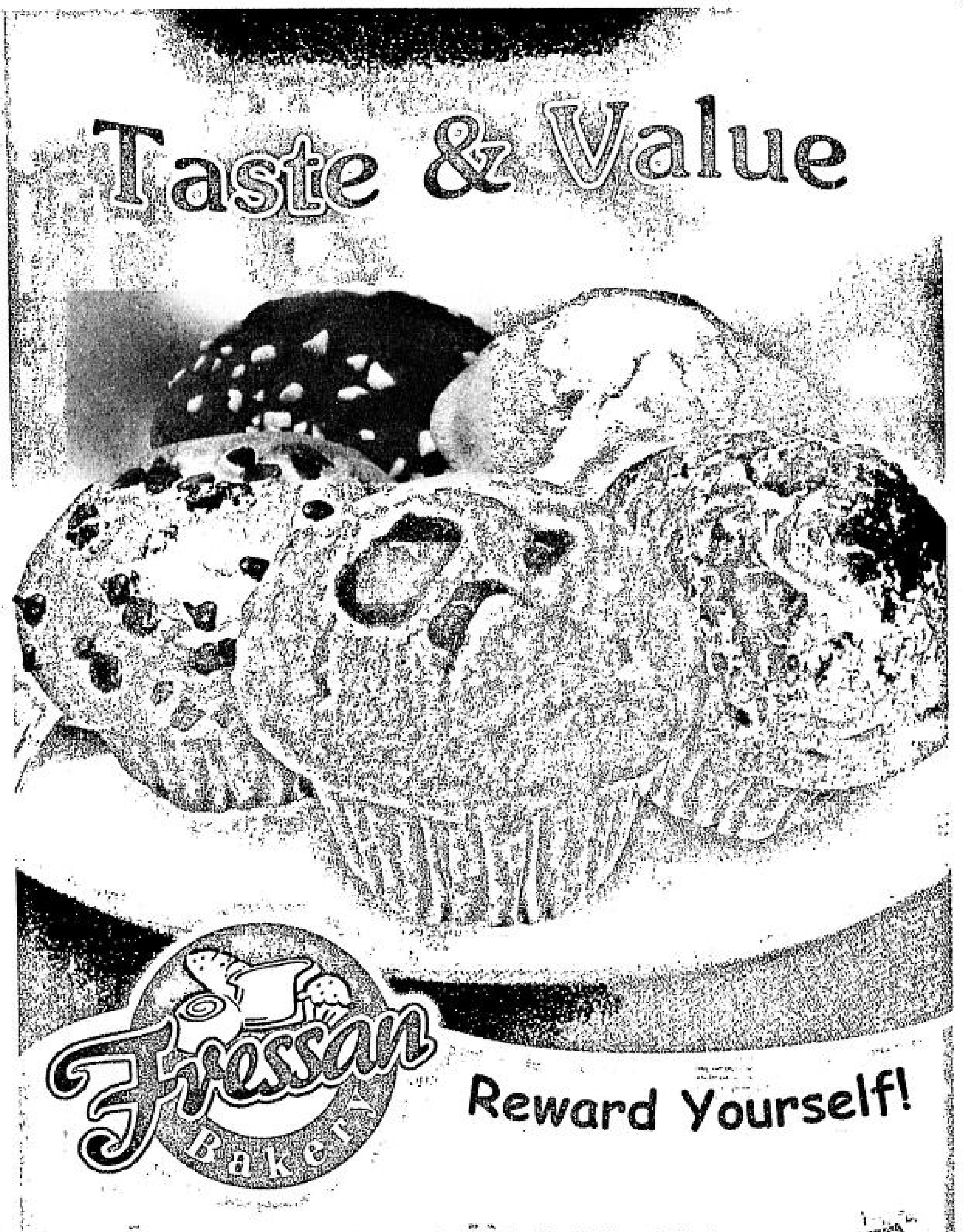
"She was so thin, very, very thin," says Claudine, recalling the first time she saw the baby. The 14-day foundling was swaddled in dirty clothes; she was thin as a bird, with lice in her baby hair, and her body riddled with insect bites. "She had diaper rashes, didn't even know how to drink milk or suck from a bottle! That means she wasn't even breast fed."

In the photographs that accompany the StarStudio cover story, however, Sabina has clearly transformed into a healthy, charming baby who is "*madaldal*," as her new mother says. Claudine tells StarStudio how, even after a long day of taping and shooting, she asks the baby's *yaya* to wake Sabina at 5 a.m. (the child's morning playtime), and stays awake to take her daughter out for 15 minutes of sun on the terrace, and to give her a bath. "Because of her, I want to go to church more, I want to know God more, I became more forgiving, more *matipid*, wanting the best not only for her, but for my children in the future."

Also in the October issue, Judy Ann Santos reveals the diet and exercise regimen that has pared and sculpted her once 14- lbs body into the new sexy form that she sports for the new fantasy series, "Krystala" (where she plays a superhero).

Two stars also open their homes for StarStudio readers this month: Rica Peralejo is photographed in her newly renovated pad, a serene refuge with a beachy feel especially styled for her by ex-boyfriend Bernard Palanca; and Erik Santos who gamely shows off the flood-proof Malabon abode that he calls home.

StarStudio is the monthly show-biz lifestyle glossy from ABS-CBN Publishing. The October issue is now in newsstands and bookstores nationwide.



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IBINIGAY NOONG AUGUST 27, 2004 SA 15TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONSUMERS AWARDS.

See you at the 'Fiesta!'

From page D1

Flamenco, paella, puppetry and poetry dominate the festival

recreating the spirit of Cervantes' immortal work." The group believes that puppetry can be a vehicle for expression for adults, so that it draws from the great works of literature for inspiration.

The play, "Recoged Esta Voz (Gather This Voice)," based on the life and works of Miguel Hernandez, one of the most important Spanish poets, will be presented by Dulaang UP on Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m. at the RCBC Auditorium.

Hernandez in Filipino

Meanwhile, "Recoged Esta Voz," the multilingual anthology of Hernandez's immortal poetry, will be launched on Oct. 18, 7:30 p.m., at the RCBC Auditorium. The poems, translated into seven Filipino languages, will be read in their original Spanish version and also in English, Kapampangan, Ilocano, Bicolano, Ilonggo, Cebuano and Chabacano. Joey Ayala will render some of the Spanish poems into songs.

"Fiesta!" is now on its fourth year and has made a mark on Manila's cultural scene. Says Javier Galvan, director of Instituto Cervantes: "Every year, we try to give Filipinos a wide array of Spanish cultural elements. As in the dance category, we feel that this year, we should break away from the stereotype, that's why we invited a contemporary dance group that is of great prestige and innovative capacity."

Galvan is referring to Aukeran, a Spanish modern dance company which deviates from the traditional flamenco and fuses the Basque tradition and modern innovation. The 10-member group, formed in 1997, will perform on Oct. 9 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Highlight of the performance is the impressive light display that captures the body movements and intense footwork of the dancers.

In "Gaudi," noted Spanish lensman Marc Llimargas captures in photographs the most symbolic works of architect Antoni Gaudi, who was at the forefront of the art nouveau movement in Spain in the late 19th century until the early 20th century. Gaudi created some of Barcelona's most notable and fascinating landmarks. By fusing art nouveau and Gothic influences, Gaudi came up with an original architectural genre that he called "Mediterranean Gothic."

BAMBALINA's highly acclaimed puppet version of "Don Quixote"

The exhibit will run from Oct. 5 to 31 at the Ayala Museum in Greenbelt 4, Makati. On Oct. 6 at 1:30 p.m., restoration architect and cultural historian Ramon Zaragoza will deliver a lecture on the influence of Gaudi on Filipino architecture.

Another photo exhibit, "Las Calles de Manila," by Marlon Despues, will be held from Oct. 11 to 30 at Casa Armas Restaurant in Greenbelt 3.

Intramuros on canvas

To mark Spain's National Day on Oct. 12, Instituto Cervantes will hold an on-the-spot painting contest, "Concurso de Pintura Rapida," at the historic Intramuros. Theme of the contest is "Rincones de Intramuros (Corners of Intramuros)," which should be the inspiration for every art work to be submitted.

The competition is open to all Philippine residents, 17 years old and above. A participant is entitled to submit only one entry (minimum of 35 x 38 cm and maximum of 60 x 60 cm), done in any medium. Registration is on Oct. 17, from 7 to 9:30 a.m., at the Puerta Real Gardens in Intramuros. Submission of the finished paintings will be at 3 p.m. The exhibit of the art pieces is from 4 to 7 p.m. The winner will receive P35,000. A People's Choice Award will also be given.

Meanwhile, a painting exhibit, "Letras y Figuras," will consist of the works of the finalists of the ninth "Letras y Figuras" painting competition with this year's theme, "Spanish Icons." It will open Oct. 15, 7 p.m. at the Greenbelt 3 Lobby.

The Art Film in Greenbelt 1 is the venue of the third Spanish film festival, "Pelicula, Pelikula," which runs until Oct. 17. Eighteen recent Spanish and Latin American film titles, boasting of award-winning directors and notable actors, will be screened with English subtitles. Moviegoers will get the chance to vote for the best film and even win a trip for two to Bangkok.

Spanish music will also be showcased by the performing acoustic duo of Joseph Henríquez and Hang Nguyen, Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m. at the RCBC Auditorium.

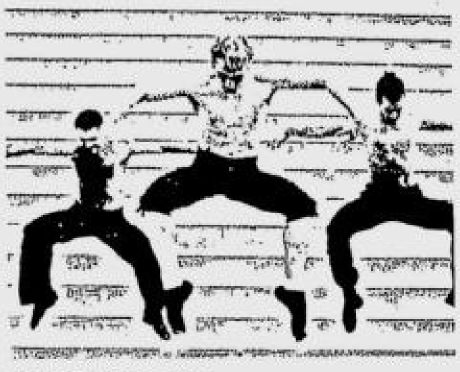
And what is Spain without flamenco and the sumptuous *paella*?

Caponata Argamacho, one of the best flamenco-jazz trios in the world, will perform in a series of concerts: Oct. 20, 7 p.m., in Cebu; Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m., at the RCBC Plaza in Makati; and Oct. 22, 7 p.m. at Greenbelt 3.

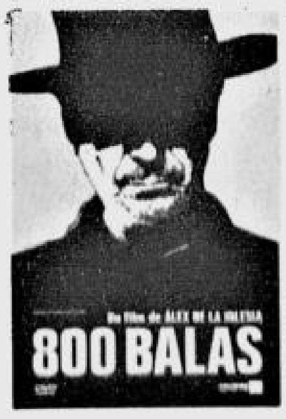
For gastronomic delights, Instituto Cervantes and Hyatt Regency Hotel are holding a month-long Spanish food festival, with authentic Spanish cuisine to be prepared by a Spanish chef.

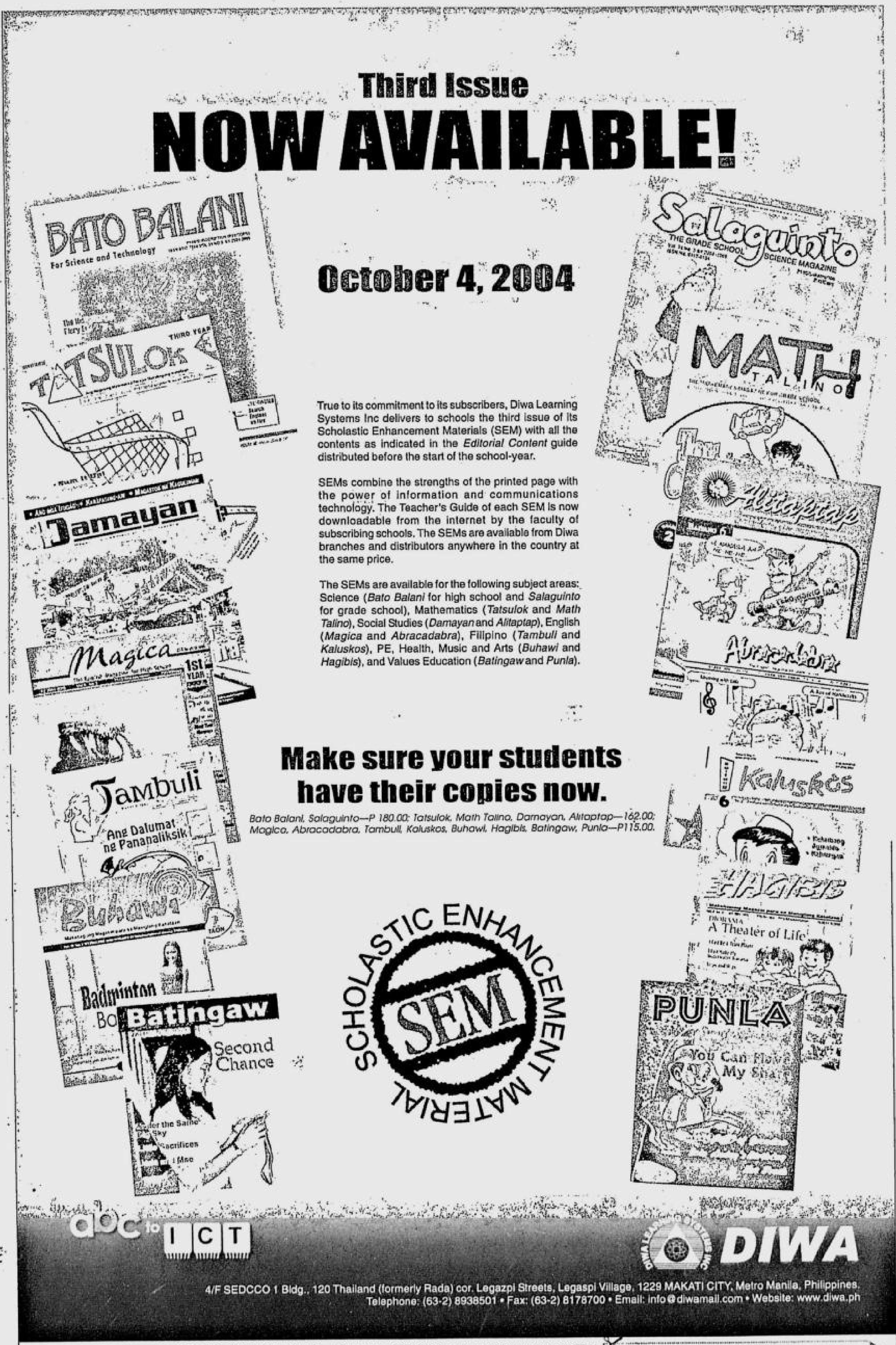
The music and food treats will have a reprise during the "Verbana" street party in Intramuros, featuring Latin bands and Spanish restaurants in Manila, on Oct. 17.

Call the Instituto Cervantes, 5261482 to 85. Visit http://manila.cervantes.es


AUKERAN in action

ACOUSTIC duo of Joseph Henríquez and Hang Nguyen


Un film de ALEX DE LA IGLESIA
800 BALAS
BLACK comedy by Spanish filmmaker Alex de la Iglesia



Third Issue

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October 4, 2004

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